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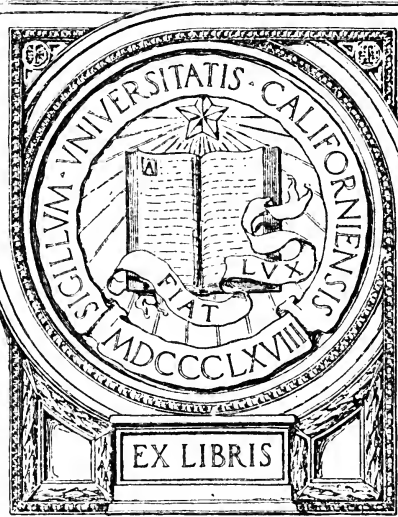
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THE TREATY OF MIŞR IN
ṬABARĪ

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.
PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK, TORONTO
MELBOURNE AND BOMBAY

THE TREATY OF MIŞR IN ṬABARĪ

AN ESSAY IN HISTORICAL CRITICISM

BY

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OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1913

B&Z

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IT MAY COME

1911

1911

1911

CHIEF REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

1. Ṭabarī, *Annales*. Ed. De Goeje. (Lugd. Bat., 1879, &c. 8vo.) *De Goeje*.
2. *The First Mohammadan Treaties with Christians*. By Stanley Lane-Poole, in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. Vol. XXIV. Sec. C, no. 13 . . . *P. R. I. A.*
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6. *The Churches and Monasteries of Egypt*. Evetts and Butler (Anecdota Oxoniensia). Oxford, 1895 *Abū Šāliḥ*.
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THE TREATY OF MIŞR IN ṬABARĪ

IN returning to the very obscure and difficult subject of the Mohammedan conquest of Egypt, I desire generally to correct any important error proved against my former work¹ by well-founded criticism, to deal with, and if possible overthrow, certain objections which seem to be ill-founded, and to set out revised conclusions based on later reflection and research.

But the scope of this essay must be limited: and I cannot hope or pretend to give here such a list of corrections and additions as would be required if a second edition of *Arab Conquest* were demanded. No such demand is likely to come in my lifetime: and, the wider field of travel being forbidden, all I can do is to select some area which seems rich in opportunities for the kind of excursion which I propose. Such an area seems to be provided by the traditions which Ṭabarī has recorded in his great work, and to which I have not hitherto devoted the detailed study which possibly they merit, and in particular by the Treaty of Mişr.²

¹ *The Arab Conquest of Egypt*. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1902.

² The reference is to de Goeje's well-known edition of Ṭabarī. I have been justly criticized for using Zotenberg's edition, and that

It may tend to clearness if these various traditions—or the chief of them—are set out in the order of Ṭabarī, although that does not correspond to any order of chronology. As a rule a rough paraphrase or mere outline will suffice: where questions of importance arise, a literal translation will be given: and for the actual treaty the Arabic text must accompany its English rendering. The traditions are mainly seven in number—A, B, C, D, E, F, G—which I will give, each with its exordium.

A. *Ibn Ishāḳ says, as said Ibn Ḥumaid, that Salamah said on his authority, that:*

Omar after subjugating the whole of Syria wrote to 'Amr ibn al 'Aṣī to march to Egypt with his army. So he set out, and captured Bāb al Yūn (Babylon) in the year A.H. 20. There is a difference of opinion concerning the date of the taking of Alexandria, some giving the year as A.H. 25.

B.¹ *Ibn Ḥumaid says that Salamah says thus, on the authority of Ibn Ishāḳ, who says that Al Ḳāsim (an Egyptian) ibn Ḳuzman told him—on the authority of Ziyād ibn Fazū, who said he was in 'Amr's army when he took Miṣr and Alexandria—the following story:*

We took Alexandria in the Caliphate of Othman in the year A.H. 21 or 22.

error will not be here repeated: nor would it avail to explain the reason for using Zotenberg originally.

¹ De Goeje, pp. 2580–83. Ibn Ḥumaid died 248 A.H., and Salamah after 190 A.H.

After the capture of Bāb al Yūn we captured gradually those villages of the Delta which were between us and Alexandria, one after another, till we reached Balḥīb. Our prisoners had already reached Mecca, Medina, and Yemen at the time when we reached Balḥīb: when the commander of Alexandria sent to 'Amr, saying, 'I have already paid tribute to Persian and Roman,¹ whom I hate more than you Arabs. I will pay you tribute, if you please, provided that you restore the prisoners of Egypt whom you have taken.'

'Amr answered, proposing in effect an armistice² till he could consult Omar and get his reply upon the question: and this was agreed. They stayed at Balḥīb till Omar's answer came, when 'Amr read it out. It refused to restore the prisoners who were already in Arab lands, as impracticable, but offered to allow all prisoners in 'Amr's custody a free choice between Christianity and Islam. These terms were accepted by the commander of Alexandria.

Thereupon the captives were all mustered, and each one had to pronounce in presence of the Arab army and a large gathering of Christians. Every decision was followed by shouts on one side or the other, the Arab cheers being louder than the cheers

¹ How could any Roman governor of Alexandria speak of having paid tribute to the Romans? That would imply that he was in revolt against the emperor. There is further no evidence whatever to connect any one occupying the position of governor or commander at this time with the period of Persian domination in Egypt.

² This may be a reminiscence of the eleven months' armistice recorded by John of Nikiou.

when a village is taken. The Arabs claimed that the great majority chose Islam.

Al Ḳāsim (the contemporary soldier) says: 'Among the prisoners was 'Abdallah ibn 'Abd ar Raḥmān abū Maryām, who in my lifetime became chief of the Banū Zubaid. When we gave him the choice between Islam and Christianity, though his father, mother, and brothers were among the Christians, he chose Islam, and we transferred him to us. Then his father, mother, and brothers sprang out upon him, assailing us with abuse, and they tore his garments. But he became our chief, as you may see this day.'

'After this Alexandria surrendered and we entered it. . . . He who thinks otherwise, viz. that Alexandria and the cities round about were not brought under tribute, and that there was no treaty with the inhabitants, by Allāh he is a liar.'

Note. This tradition claims to be derived from a soldier of the conquest. It insists that Alexandria was surrendered under treaty, and it has some points of correspondence with the history of John of Nikiou. But it begins with the capture of Babylon and says nothing about any treaty there.

C.¹ *Ṭabarī writes that Saif says in the letter which As Sarī wrote to me (Ṭabarī) that Shu'aib informed him on [Ibn Ishāq's] authority and that of Ar Rabīa' and that of Abū 'Uthmān and that of Abū Hārithah, as follows:*

¹ De Goeje, p. 2584.

Omar remained at Jerusalem after making the treaty of peace there, and sent 'Amr to Egypt. He also sent Zubair in support.

Note. Here the authorities go back from Sarī, contemporary with Ṭabarī, to Abū 'Uthmān, who died some seventy to eighty years after the subjugation of Egypt. It is obvious that very many links in this chain of tradition are missing: nor is there anything to show what documentary evidence, if any, was available to Sarī when he made his communication in writing, or to what extent he relied on mere oral tradition.

D. *As Sarī has written to me on the authority of of Shu'aib on the authority of Saif, who says Abū 'Uthmān has told us on the authority of Khālīd ibn Mi'dān and 'Ubādah,*¹ as follows :

'Amr set out to Egypt after Omar returned to Medina,² and marched till he came to Bāb al Yūn. Zubair followed, and they joined forces. Here Abū Maryām, the katholikos of Miṣr, met them, with him being the bishop [Abū Maryām] and the officials, he [the katholikos] having been sent by Al Muḩauḩis to protect their country.'

There was fighting then between these people and 'Amr, who proposed a parley, details of which are given by Ṭabarī.³ But the dialogue is too lengthy for useful quotation, and the next words seem to

¹ Khālīd died 102 or 103 A. H., and 'Ubādah 118 A. H.

² This obviously disagrees with C.

³ pp. 2585-6.

record a story of treachery as follows: 'Quite suddenly a raid was made on 'Amr and Zubair at night by Farkab. 'Amr was prepared, and met him: he and all his followers were killed.' Ibn al Athīr says 'the tribune was killed', which implies that Farkab was the military tribune.¹ But the story is very confused, and continues thus:

'Amr and Zubair marched straight for 'Ain Shams: in it were a large number of them (the enemy). 'Amr sent Abrahah ibn as Sabbāḥ to Al Faramā, and 'Aūf ibn Mālīk to Alexandria, and he encamped against it. Then each of them said to the men of his city, "If you capitulate, you shall have the status of protection at our hands,"'²—and so forth.

Note. This tradition like the last appears to hang upon the evidence of Ṭabari's contemporary Sarī, and a weak chain behind him. The same is true of the following traditions, E and F.

E. *As Sarī has written to me (Ṭabarī) on the authority of Shu'aib, on the authority of Saif, on the authority of Abū 'Uthmān and Abū Hārithah, that these two said as follows:*

'When 'Amr encamped against the people at 'Ain Shams, the rule was between the Copts and the Nubians. Zubair came with him. Then said the people of Miṣr to their king, "Why do you go out

¹ Ibn al Athīr distinctly says that the tribune was called *Arṭabūn*, which, as I have shown, should be read *Aretion*. *Arab Conquest*, p. 215, n. 2.

² The parley with these two cities by envoys sent during the Arab march to Babylon is clearly legendary.

against a people which has smitten Chosroes and Caesar (Heraclius) and vanquished them in their countries? Make terms with the people and get a treaty from them and do not expose yourself to them nor us to them.”’

‘And this was on the fourth day.’

What is meant by the fourth day is not clear: probably the fourth day of a truce, which seems to be referred to above (pp. 2586-7). Fighting followed: Zubair mounted the wall of the fortress and descended among them by force, while the people from within the fortress are described as issuing out of the gate to make terms with ‘Amr.

The terms of the treaty of peace are now given textually: and—

‘All the people of Miṣr accepted this treaty, and the horses were collected: ‘Amr founded Fuṣṭāṭ, and the Muslims stayed there. Abū Maryam and Abū Maryām appeared and spoke to ‘Amr about the prisoners captured after the battle’ (? Heliopolis).

Then follows the well-known story of the Muslim meal and the Egyptian banquet, with other matter neither clear nor important.

F. *As Sarī*¹ has written to me on the authority of *Shu‘aib* on the authority of *Saif* on the authority of *Abū Sa‘īd ar Rabā‘ ibn an Numān* on the authority of *‘Amr ibn Shu‘aib*, as follows:

‘When ‘Amr and Al Muḩauḩis met at ‘Ain Shams and their cavalry began to fight’, there were signs of insubordination in the Muslim ranks, and the Muslims

¹ p. 2592.

were very hard pressed for a while, though in the end they won a complete victory. . . . ' Mişr was captured during the first Rabi' in the year 16 and the sovereignty of Islam rose therein.'

G. *'Alī ibn Saḥl*¹ informs me saying, *Al Walīd ibn Muslim* has related that *Ibn Lahī'ah* told him on the authority of *Yazīd ibn Ḥabīb* that :

'When the Muslims had conquered Egypt, they sent an expedition to Egyptian Nubia':—and the expedition clearly was a failure.

¹ p. 2593.

HAVING now sketched out the main traditions with which we are concerned, I come to a discussion of the treaty. The tradition in which it occurs depends on the letter of Ṭabarī's contemporary Sarī, who got it from Shu'aib, Shu'aib from Saif (who died about 180 A. H.), and he from Abū 'Uthmān (who died about 100 A. H.). But these narrators can hardly have repeated the text of the treaty, which Sarī professes to give and which he may have got from an independent source. It is even possible that he or some informant may have seen an original document or a copy. On the other hand, there are certain obscurities and difficulties, both in the form and in the substance of the treaty, which suggest that it has suffered from a process of handing down, whether by word of mouth or by written record. Dr. Stanley Lane-Poole thinks that, broadly speaking, the treaty bears on its face the seal of its own authenticity: but the words giving the total of the poll-tax and the method of its payment, as well as some other points, seem by their uncertainty to denote at least the hand of a copyist. We know that some early treaties were preserved: Omar is said to have had a box full of them. They were probably executed in duplicate, so that one copy at least remained with the conquered people: and in this case either the original or a copy may conceivably have been seen by Ṭabarī, or rather by Sarī his informant, 300 years later. But it requires a somewhat robust faith to believe, as Dr. Lane-Poole seems to believe, in the verbal inspiration of the text.

However, if the Treaty of Mişr is genuine, I must grant that Ṭabarī associates it very closely with the fall of Babylon and not with the surrender of Alexandria. Consequently, if Ṭabarī is right, I was wrong, as Dr. Lane-Poole alleges,¹ in calling it the Treaty of Alexandria and in identifying it with the very important Treaty of Alexandria given by John of Nikiou.

I propose, however, to reserve this question of the genuineness of the treaty in Ṭabarī to a later stage in the argument : to take Ṭabarī's version of events as it stands : and to discuss

- i. The time and place of the treaty :
- ii. The parties to the treaty :
- iii. The meaning of the treaty :
- iv. The authenticity of the treaty :
- and v. The identity of Al Muḳauḳis.

I. *The moment at which the treaty was made and the place.*

On these matters there is little room for doubt, if Ṭabarī is to be believed. Ṭabarī's story is as follows. There had been at some point a parley between the belligerents and a truce for four or five days, which ended in the decision of the Romans to reject the Muslim terms : and there is some evidence that the truce was broken on the fourth day treacherously. Fighting was renewed : but how long the siege lasted after this rupture Ṭabarī does not record. Victory, however, determined in favour of the Arabs at a moment when Zubair scaled the walls and

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 240.

fought his way down into the fortress. At the same moment tokens of surrender had been made, and some of the defenders were on their way out to arrange a capitulation. Zubair and his victorious following joined the envoys of the garrison, and accompanied them through the fortress gate to 'Amr's presence. Thereupon the brief but solemn treaty of peace was drawn up and attested by Zubair himself and his two sons, 'Abdallah and Muḥammad. Such is the somewhat unconvincing story.

There can be no question that the incident is described as relating to the surrender of the Castle of Babylon or *Ḳaṣr ash Shama'*. Dr. Lane-Poole in his account of the matter remarks¹ that Ṭabarī does not name the fortress or city wall which Zubair scaled. True; but other Muslim writers leave no shadow of doubt. They name the fortress Babylon: they give the point at which the assault was made: and Zubair's scaling-ladder was long preserved at Fustāṭ as a relic of the siege. Moreover, Dr. Lane-Poole himself, in citing Maḳrīzī's account, says²:— 'Fighting with the garrison of Babylon was accordingly renewed: but finally Al Muḳauḳis persuaded the people that resistance was hopeless, and 'Amr's terms were accepted.' He urges, however, that 'the capture of the fort, *الحصن*, must be distinguished from the fall of the castle, *القصر*, i.e. Babylon. He bases this conclusion upon the supposed discrepancy between the date given by John of Nikiou for the surrender of the fortress of Babylon, i.e. 9 April, 641 (which date is unimpeachable), and Maḳrīzī's statement that the negotiations between

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 242.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 245.

'Amr and Al Muḩauḩis began at Rauḩah at the time of high Nile, which would be about six months earlier. But I think the discrepancy does not lie here. We know that the negotiations failed and the war continued: but there is no warrant for compressing the duration of the renewed struggle into a few days instead of six months. The endeavour is made in order to identify the negotiations as described by Maḩrīzī with the four days' truce mentioned by Ṭabarī. But this truce almost certainly occurred shortly after the arrival of the reinforcements under Zubair.¹ It is true that just before this event the fact is recorded that 'Amr set out for Egypt and marched till he came to Bāb al Yūn': but this, taken as a general description of the march, is not inconsistent with the insertion of detail which follows, nor with the fact (which seems established) that Zubair joined 'Amr's army before it had reached Babylon. I therefore regard this parley and the four days' truce as a quite distinct incident from the Rauḩah negotiations at the time of high Nile, and as having occurred some weeks earlier, and prior to 'Amr's arrival at Babylon. So I disagree with Dr. Lane-Poole's statement where he says²: 'According to Ṭabarī, after the Arabs had reached Babylon, there came to meet them on the part of Al Muḩauḩis a patriarch (*gāthaliḩ* catholicus) and a bishop. . . . This was before reinforcements had reached the Muslims.' On the contrary, Ṭabarī says³: 'Zubair followed, and they joined forces. *Here* Abū Maryam, the katholikos of Mişr, met them,

¹ Trad. D above, pp. 11-12.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 241.

³ De Goeje, p. 2584.

with him being the bishop,' and again¹ 'Amr and Zubair marched straight for 'Ain Shams'.

But the accounts, both in Ṭabarī and in Maḳrīzī, are so wanting in clearness and precision that the construction of any continuous narrative or orderly sequence of events must admittedly be largely a matter of remote inference or even conjecture.

Dr. Lane-Poole, however, in order to uphold his theory has to connect the treaty, not with the fall of Babylon, i.e. Ḳaṣr ash Shama', but with the fall of a fort on the ridge of rocky ground to the south, on which, according to Strabo, there stood in his day a fort originally erected by the Persians some 500 years earlier. This attempt to deprive Trajan's fortress of its well-known name of Babylon assumes the survival of the old original Persian fort in the seventh century, an assumption which rests upon no proof whatever, but is contradicted by explicit evidence of the Arab historians. It might suffice to say that Abu 'l Maḥāsin definitely calls the fortress Ḳaṣr ash Shama',² while Maḳrīzī agrees with other writers in stating that the fortress was opposite the island of Rauḍah, as Dr. Lane-Poole himself admits.³ No other fortress but Trajan's (or Ḳaṣr ash Shama') corresponds in any way with this description, and the suggested identification of the fortress in Ṭabarī with the *Istabl Antār*⁴ is altogether impossible. Indeed, it is a mistake into which no one familiar

¹ De Goeje, p. 2586.

² *Annales*, edd. Juynboll et Matthes, vol. i, p. 8 (Lugd. Bat., 1855-61).

³ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 244.

⁴ This identification occurs in Dr. Lane-Poole's *Cairo Fifty Years Ago*, pp. 146-7, to which he refers (Murray, 1896).

with the topography of the region could possibly fall; and Lane's evidence proves at most the existence of a Roman embankment at the foot of the ridge. There is not a single trace of any ancient building upon the ridge. Severus, too, expressly says¹: 'The Arabs . . . arrived at a fortress built of stone, situated between Upper Egypt and the Delta and called Babylon. . . . Then the Arabs called that place, namely the fortress, Bablūn al Fuṣṭāṭ and that is its name to this day.' Severus uses the terms قصر and حصن indifferently, and I venture to say that there is no warrant whatever for distinguishing them. Dr. Lane-Poole says²: 'The capture of the fort, الحصن, must evidently be distinguished from the fall of the castle القصر. . . . Maḳrīzī mentions another fortress besides Ḳaṣr ash Shama' . . . and this other fortress which was situated on a rocky hill to the south-east of Ḳaṣr ash Shama', and was within the city, was particularly called the fortress or palace قصر of Babylon.' What is the authority for this statement? It may rest on the mistaken evidence of Al Kuḏā'ī, which Maḳrīzī cites, but admits to be at variance with the much higher authority of Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam.³

But M. Casanova, in his learned edition of Maḳrīzī lends countenance to a theory at once similar and dissimilar to that of Dr. Lane-Poole. Commenting on the statement in Maḳrīzī's text that the Muslims laid siege to Bāb al Yūn, in which were Romans, Copts, and the Muḳauḳis, Casanova

¹ Brit. Mus. MS., 26100, p. 105.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 245.

³ See M. Casanova's *Maḳrīzī*, part iii, p. 109 (Imprimerie de l'Institut Français au Caire, 1906).

writes :—‘ Cette tradition, en effet, semble en contradiction avec la première. Mais il est à remarquer qu’il s’agit cette fois de Bāb alioûn, et puisque ce nom subsiste encore, il faut en conclure qu’il y a eu deux sièges distincts, celui de Ḳaṣr ash Cham’ et celui de Bāb alioûn’¹ : and he goes on to say that Strabo’s description excludes the Ḳaṣr ash Shama’, while it fits the height of the modern Bablûn, ‘ qui est très escarpée du côté du Nil ’, thus assuming the existence of the old fort at the conquest. So he makes two sieges and two forts : but whereas Dr. Lane-Poole says that the ḥiṣn was Ḳaṣr ash Shama’, while the ḳaṣr was on the rocky ridge, Casanova says that the ḥiṣn was the fortified enclosure of the town, while ‘ le ḳaṣr désigne tout particulièrement la forteresse de Babylone ’. But I confess that I find his reasoning hard to follow. For at one moment he says that Ḳaṣr ash Shama’, ‘ *qui représentait la ville, fut prise de vive force,* ’ and the next that ‘ le ḥiṣn répondrait mieux à la ville même ’ : and when he charges me with failing to see the difference between the two forts² and the two Arab traditions, and of error in describing Ḳaṣr ash Shama’ as ‘ the Roman fortress of Babylon ’, I stand not only impenitent but more convinced than ever that my description is correct, that the name Babylon was applied to Ḳaṣr ash Shama’ as well as to the town of Miṣr, that Bāb al Yûn or Bāb aliûn is a mere blunder for ‘ Babylon ’,

¹ Casanova, p. 121 n.

² Casanova, p. 121 n. I pointed out the difference between Strabo’s fort and Ḳaṣr ash Shama’ built by Trajan, at least twenty years before Casanova’s work was published, viz., in my *Ancient Coptic Churches*, vol. i, pp. 171–4. The charge against me therefore is not very well founded.

and that in all the hazy and confused statements about the fortress made by the Arab historians, the reference is to *Ḳaşr ash Shama'* and not to the early Persian fort, *of which no trace remained at the conquest.*

For Maḳrīzī himself definitely calls the fortress *hişn*.¹ He identifies the site, rightly or wrongly, with that of an early Persian fort, which, he says, lay in ruins 500 years before the Romans rebuilt it.² Moreover, he quotes Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam in the same connexion as saying that 'the Persians founded the fortress (*hişn*) which is to-day at *Fuṣṭāṭ Mişr*': and he further cites Al *Ḳudā'i* as remarking of the *Ḳaşr ash Shama'* that it was begun by the Persians, but finished by the Romans, *who held it till the Arab conquest.*

Now two things are clear from this: (1) that at the date of the conquest, i. e. some seven centuries after Strabo's time, all trace of the original Persian fort had vanished, and (2) that Arab writers identify, however mistakenly, the site of the two fortresses, the Persian and the Roman, and not only fail to distinguish them, but are not conscious that any question of a distinction could arise. That Zubair's exploit is connected with *Ḳaşr ash Shama'* by them, is certain: and if, as Casanova urges, the fortress in question were Strabo's fortress on the steep ridge,

¹ Casanova, p. 121.

² This, of course, is wrong. Something at least of the old Persian fort survived in Strabo's time, and *Ḳaşr ash Shama'* was built by Trajan. Yet it is quite possible, indeed very probable, that Trajan found Persian remains, whether of temple or fort, on the site of *Ḳaşr ash Shama'*, as the stories of Murtadī and *Yākūt* indicate.

the incident of 'Ubādah,¹ which turns on Roman horsemen issuing from the fortress gate and being chased back to it, would be impossible even of invention—it would be too ludicrous. Maḳrīzī, however, not only connects the fortress of the conquest with the island of the arsenal or Rauḍah, but he says that boats were moored against this fortress. It is absolutely impossible to apply such a description to any fortress but Ḳaṣr ash Shama':² that it was true of Ḳaṣr ash Shama' is proved by the whole tenor of the Arab stories of the siege, and the proof has been confirmed and rendered visible lately by the excavations which have revealed the channel or waterway and small quay at the very foot of the Iron Gate of the fortress. Lastly, I would urge that even if a detached fort existed on the ridge, the capture of such a secondary position could not be the determining factor in the operations round Miṣr, so long as the huge and immensely powerful fortress erected by Trajan—the fortress in which the Roman commander had his head-quarters—still defied the Muslim arms.

Both the military exigencies of the case, therefore, and the records of the Arab historians point to Ḳaṣr ash Shama' as that castle of Babylon which they represent as capitulating under the Treaty of Miṣr. Indeed the evidence of their intention is so

¹ Casanova, p. 119.

² Casanova remarks, in objecting to my contention:—'Il serait étrange qu'une forteresse fût en plaine et immédiatement dominée par une hauteur.' To this I reply, that the strangeness does not alter the fact, and that it would be much more strange if boats were moored to a fortress on the top of a hill.

overwhelming, that any other theory is untenable : although I must assert with emphasis that the question what the Arab historians intended to represent is totally different from the question whether their representation of the facts is correct. And while I think Ṭabari's opinion very clear, I think it no less mistaken, as will be shown.

II. *The Parties to the Treaty.*

Granted that the treaty is genuine, it bears its own witness to the fact that it was made between 'Amr, the commander of the Arab forces, and the people of Mişr in general.

It is also clear that, according to Ṭabari, the treaty was made on the side of the people of Mişr by plenipotentiaries who came out of the fortress, in other words by the defenders of the fortress. Unfortunately in the early Muslim treaties it was not the practice for both parties to set their hand to the instrument. The signing, sealing, and delivering was all done by the Muslims : and the treaty is rather a grant of security and protection conditional upon terms to be observed than a deed of mutual covenants solemnly entered into and executed between two parties. Hence in this case there is nothing in the document to show who actually negotiated the treaty on behalf of the people of Mişr, and the question can only be settled by external evidence.

Dr. Lane-Poole says boldly :¹ ' It is abundantly evident that this is a treaty with the Copts, not with the Romans. . . . The people of Mişr, not the Roman army of occupation, still less the emperor

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 239.

Heraclius, were the contracting parties on the other side. As there is no indication in the treaty itself that the Romans were consulted in the matter, we must conclude that this treaty was made behind their backs; that it was a compact between the Copts and the Arabs without the authority of the Roman garrison, though these last had the option of accepting the same terms.' Again,¹ 'It was, as is evident, a treaty with the Copts of the city of Miṣr as against the Romans : ' once more : ² ' Ṭabari's story fits perfectly with the contents of the treaty, which is thus shown to be a treaty with the Egyptian people against the wish of the Roman army of occupation : ' and finally,³ 'In each story' (i. e. Ṭabari's and Maḳrīzī's) 'it is essentially a treaty with the Copts, not with the Romans.'

Now what is the justification for all this? It is neither more nor less than the fact that to the *people of Miṣr* was conveyed the grant of security under the treaty. Starting with that fact, Dr. Lane-Poole lays down the proposition that the people of Miṣr were Copts: he then argues that the Copts were hostile to the Romans, and that consequently the treaty was made in favour of the Copts: and he concludes that the treaty, being in favour of the Copts, was not only 'without the authority of the Romans', but 'against the Romans' and 'behind their backs'. Such is the logical process, which now has to be examined.

Who were the people of Miṣr? In the first place, as Dr. Lane-Poole remarks, the term *Miṣr* has a double meaning—the capital city and the country of Egypt

¹ p. 241.² p. 243.³ p. 245.

—and we do not even know for certain which was intended. But he adduces the analogy of other early Muslim treaties—those of Damascus, Lydda, and Jerusalem—and argues that the practice of the Arabs was to make a treaty, upon the capture of a chief town, with the townsfolk. Accordingly Mişr in the present case should be taken as meaning the city of Mişr, which lay over and spread beyond the region now miscalled Old Cairo, though it seems to have been identified loosely at times with the ancient Memphis¹ and its environs on both banks of the Nile. How far the city of Mişr extended at the time of the conquest, and what fortifications it had besides *Ḳaşr ash Shama'*, cannot be known. But there is evidence that it extended somewhat widely. The outpost of 'Umm Dunain (the Tendounias of John of Nikiou) lay at a point now represented by the *Esbekiah* in Cairo, and the very ancient churches in the *Ḥārat ar Rūm* and *Ḥārat az Zuwailah* were apparently considered within the old city of Mişr, as *Abū Şāliḥ*² seems to indicate; and the same writer also describes the city of 'Ain Shams as lying outside the city of Mişr. But there is no evidence of any wide circumvallation: for the battle of 'Ain Shams and the fall of Tendounias seem to have been followed quickly by the Arab occupation of Mişr and the siege of the formidable fortress of Babylon.³ Here the resistance of the Romans was concentrated: but it is quite

¹ Maḳrīzī, *Sultans Mamlouks*, t. ii, p. 119 (ed. Quatremère, Paris, 1845).

² pp. 86–7, and notes: but the matter is not clear of doubt.

³ Note that John of Nikiou in his chapter-headings clearly distinguishes the capture of Mişr from the fall of Babylon.

certain that there was also a large population in the city of Miṣr.

Of what race or creed was this population? The answer is plain—Egyptian—though there was doubtless some small admixture of Jews, Arabs, Berbers, and Nubians. But it must be remembered that the Egyptians at this time, though all Christian, were of two races and two creeds, viz. by race either Copts or Graeco-Romans (Byzantines), by creed either monophysites or melkites. But the racial cleavage by no means coincided with the religious division: in other words a Roman might hold the Coptic form of faith, and a Copt might hold the melkite (or Roman or Chalcedonian) form.

Now if there is one thing indisputable in all this tangled story, it is that for the ten years preceding the time of the Arab invasion, and at that time, the Copts suffered the severest persecution at the hands of Cyrus, the nominee of Heraclius as patriarch of Alexandria and governor-general of Egypt. It is certain also that the Copts had neither bishop nor leader in the city of Miṣr, since their patriarch and all their prominent men had been driven into exile into the mountains and deserts. Whatever the relative number of the Copts might have been—even if they were as numerous at this military centre as the Romans and Roman sympathizers—it is not conceivable that there should have existed then in the city of Miṣr a body of Copts in a position to enter upon a treaty with the victorious Arabs.

Apart from this, however, one must not exaggerate the distinction between Copt and Roman. It must be remembered that the Graeco-Romans at this time

were not an alien army of occupation, as Dr. Lane-Poole seems to imagine them. The country had been Graeco-Roman for 700 years, and for centuries longer if we date the mixture of race, as is right, to the early Greek settlements and trace it through Ptolemaic times. It was the Hellenes, and not the Italians, who contributed and maintained that element of the population which came to be called in later times Roman or Byzantine. And during all those centuries there had been a continuous mingling of the two races ; so that although the Egyptian racial type probably prevailed by reason of that unchangeable and invincible vitality which has ever marked it, yet the dominant civilization of the country at this time was Hellenic, whether called Byzantine or Graeco-Roman ; and from Pelusium to Barca, from Alexandria to Syene and Meroe, the land was covered with cities bearing Graeco-Roman names—cities in which the arts, the architecture, the language and the letters were far more Graeco-Roman than Coptic.

Nor is there any reason to think that the city of Mişr or city of Babylon, as it was also called,¹ presented any exception to the rule.

To say therefore that by the term *people of Mişr* only the Copts could be meant, is to make a quite baseless and unwarranted assumption.

But there are other obvious objections. A good

¹ Ptolemy, for example, calls it City of Babylon ; so does Palladius. It is frequently so called in the Aphrodito papyri, and the name may be traced onwards to the middle ages. Thus Sir J. Mandeville speaks of Egypt as 'the land of Babylon', and the term 'Soldan', 'Suldán', or 'Sowdone' (i. e. Sultan) 'of Babylon', was commonly used in English, and its analogue in continental literature up to the sixteenth century to denote the ruler of Egypt.

deal of the confusion caused by the use of the term *Copts* in the Arab historians springs from the fact that the term did not originally bear the precise and limited meaning which it now bears in common parlance. There is no doubt that at the time of the conquest the Arabs frequently used the term *Copts* as synonymous with *Egyptians*, i. e. as denoting the people of Egypt generally, and that a distinction between the Coptic and the Graeco-Roman elements in the population was not ordinarily present to their minds. Of course if a special reinforcement of imperial troops entered Egypt at any time by order of Heraclius, those troops would be called distinctively Roman by the Arabs, and are perhaps so referred to in the Treaty of Miṣr, in which—be it remarked—the Copts are not even mentioned. But that the Graeco-Roman inhabitants, as well as the Coptic, were often included under the term *Copts* is unquestionable.

This fact explains much that is otherwise inexplicable. For instance, Dr. Lane-Poole quotes Maḳrīzī as saying that Al Muḳauḳis 'left the fortress of Babylon in company with the leaders of the Copts', and crossed to the island of Rauḍah. Whoever Al Muḳauḳis was, he was the Roman governor of Egypt: and it is certain from John of Nikiou that the Copts within the fortress during the siege were actually in prison, and were barbarously treated by the Romans. Again Ṭabarī records a representation in favour of peace made *by the people of Miṣr to their king* (ملكهم). This *king* cannot possibly mean Heraclius, who is called *Caesar* in the same passage, and can only mean *ruler*, i. e. the viceroy Al

Muḳauḳis. And that meaning is placed beyond doubt by the words of Mas'ūdī,¹ who calls Al Muḳauḳis king of Mişr and lord of the Copts, and says that he used to spend part of the year in Alexandria, part in the city of Menf or Memphis, part in Ḳaşr ash Shama'. Now it is clearly ridiculous to speak of Al Muḳauḳis as king or ruler of the Copts as opposed to the Romans, or in any other sense than as ruler of the *Egyptians*. Indeed that supposition is refuted by Dr. Lane-Poole's own words, where he gives Makrīzi's story as follows :²

'Fearing that the fortresses would fall, he (Al Muḳauḳis) opened negotiations with the Arabs. He urged that the *Romans* were far more numerous and better equipped than the Muslims. . . . But Al Muḳauḳis could obtain no modification of the terms. Fighting with the garrison of Babylon was accordingly renewed : but finally Al Muḳauḳis persuaded the people that resistance was hopeless, and 'Amr's terms were accepted—a poll-tax of two dinars a head, &c.'

Clearly here Al Muḳauḳis was speaking as representative not of Copts but of Romans. I need not labour the point : but I pass on to another of even greater importance. If the treaty is genuine, it was a military convention between belligerents marking the surrender of a great Roman stronghold : and it is sheer absurdity to imagine that the Copts, who had no separate existence as a belligerent party, could have arranged such a convention in their own favour 'behind the backs of the Romans' and 'against the Romans'.

¹ ii. 412, ed. Barbier de Meynard.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 244.

To put the matter quite plainly, I would ask the following questions:—

(1) Is it denied that Al Muḳauḳis was himself a Roman as distinguished from a Copt, and was Roman governor of Egypt?

(2) Is it denied that the military governor of the fortress of Babylon was a Roman in the same sense?¹

(3) Is it denied that the garrison of the fortress was Roman and under Roman officers to the exclusion of Copts?

(4) Is it denied that the defenders of the fortress capitulated and entered into the Treaty of Miṣr?

On one and all of these points denial is impossible, whether regard be had to Dr. Lane-Poole's own admissions or to the whole evidence of Coptic and Arabic chronicles.

But if this is so, if the Treaty of Miṣr was negotiated by the Roman commander or ruler and the Roman defenders of the besieged fortress of Babylon on behalf of the people of Miṣr; how is it possible to maintain that the treaty was made 'with the Copts and not with the Romans', 'behind the backs of the Romans', 'between the Copts and the Arabs without the authority of the Roman garrison', and finally that it was 'a treaty with the Copts of the city of Miṣr as against the Romans'? Clearly such a theory is absolutely untenable; and if there is any truth in Ṭabari's story, the treaty was made with the Romans on behalf of the people of Miṣr, whether Graeco-Roman or Coptic.

¹ Dr. Lane-Poole is wrong in calling the governor of the fortress Aretion (p. 242). I do not know what his authority for this statement is: but it would seem that Aretion was the tribune killed in the night attack upon the Arabs. v. supra, p. 12, n. 1.

III. *The Meaning of the Treaty*

It remains now to give the text of the treaty and to consider its interpretation. Dr. Lane-Poole points out very justly its close correspondence with the earlier treaty, which was granted by the Caliph Omar at the capitulation of Jerusalem, and he remarks that 'Amr ibn al 'Aṣī, who made the Treaty of Miṣr, was present and subscribed the Treaty of Jerusalem as witness: moreover the two treaties 'contain not only practically identical clauses but even absolutely identical words and phrases': 'Amr therefore modelled the Treaty of Miṣr on the Treaty of Jerusalem. I propose further to follow Dr. Lane-Poole in setting out both the treaties, though on the comparison I shall have to base some conclusions quite at variance with his.

The Arabic text is as follows (De Goeje, p. 2588):

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ هَذَا مَا اعطى عمرو بن العاصی
 اهل مصر من الامان على انفسهم وملتهم واموالهم
 وكنائسهم وصلبهم وبرزهم وبكرهم لا يدخل عليهم شىء
 من ذلك ولا يُنْتَقَص ولا يساكنهم النوب وعلى اهل
 مصر ان يعطوا الجزية انا اجتموا على هذا الصلح
 وانتهت زيارة نهرهم خمسين الف الف وعليهم ما جني
 لصوتهم فان ابى احد منهم ان يجيب رفع عنهم
 من الجزاء بقدرهم ونهتنا ممن ابى بريئة وان نقص
 نهرهم من غايته انا انتهى رفع عنهم بقدر ذلك ومن

دخل في صلحهم من الروم والنوب فله مثل ما لهم
وعليه مثل ما عليهم ومن ابي واختار الذهب فهو
آمن حتى يبلغ مأمنه او يخرج من سلطاننا عليهم ما
عليهم اثلاثاً في كل ثلث جباية ثلث ما عليهم
على ما في هذا الكتاب عهد الله ونهته ونهته رسوله
ونمة الخليفة امير المؤمنين ونمة المؤمنين وعلى النوبة
الذين استجابوا ان يعينوا بكذا وكذا رأساً وكذا وكذا
فرساً على ان لا يُغزوا ولا يمنعوا من تجارة صادرة ولا
واردة شهد بذلك الربير وعبد الله ومحمد ابناه
وكتب وزدان وحضّر

One may translate as follows :

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

1. This is what 'Amr ibn al 'Aṣī granted the people of Miṣr—to wit, security for their persons and their religion and their property, their churches and their crosses, their land and their water. In none of these things shall there be any encroachment nor any abatement of their rights.¹

¹ Dr. Lane-Poole translates doubtfully 'There shall not be taken from them anything of this nor diminished'. He quotes De Sacy's rendering: 'On n'attentera à leurs droits relativement à aucune de ces choses et on ne leur fera éprouver aucun tort,' *Mémoires de l'Institut* (Acad. des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres), v. 35. Caetani renders, 'In niuna di queste cose entrerà (il governo Arabo) e nulla sarà tolto' (*Annali dell' Islam*, vol. iv, p. 304). I am following Caetani in numbering the clauses of the treaty for the sake of convenience, just as he follows my numbering for the Treaty of Alexandria given by John of Nikiou.

2. The Nubians¹ shall not settle among them.

3. The people of Mişr are bound to pay the poll-tax, if they agree upon this treaty of peace and the inundation of their river has reached full level—fifty millions.

4. They are responsible for any acts of their brigands.

5. If any of them refuse [the terms of the treaty], the total of the poll-tax shall be reduced for them in proportion ; and we are free of obligation to protect those who refuse.

6. If their river does not rise to its usual level, then the sum [of taxation] shall be reduced for them in proportion.

7. Whosoever of the Romans or the Nubians enters into their treaty, for him are the same rights as for them (i. e. the people of Mişr) and the same obligations.

8. Whosoever refuses [these terms] and chooses to depart, he shall be safe until he reaches his own place of security or quits our dominion.

9. The tribute imposed is to be paid by three equal instalments, one-third at each payment.

10. For what is written in this treaty stands the pledge and warranty of God, the warranty of His Prophet, the warranty of the Caliph, the Commander of the Faithful, and the warranty of the Faithful.

11. For the Nubians who come under this treaty, it is prescribed that they shall furnish so

¹ I totally reject Dr. Lane-Poole's translation of *garrisons*, with which Caetani dallies needlessly, though he decides against it in the end. My reasons will be given below.

many head (of cattle) and so many horses; and in return¹ they shall not be plundered nor hindered in their trade, coming or going.

Witnesses, Az Zubair and 'Abdallah and Muḥammad,² his sons. Wardān wrote the treaty, and there were present . . . (so and so—names omitted).

Such is the Treaty of Miṣr. I now give the Treaty of Jerusalem, mainly in Dr. Lane-Poole's translation:

In the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful.

1. This is what the servant of God, Omar, Commander of the Faithful, gave to the people of Jerusalem in pledge of security. He gave them security for their persons and their goods and their churches and their crosses, and its³ sick and its sound, and all of their religion: their churches shall not be impoverished or destroyed: nor shall [aught] of it be diminished, neither of its appurtenances nor of its crosses nor of anything of its provisions. And they shall not be forced against their faith, and not one of them shall be harmed.

2. None of the Jews shall dwell with them in Jerusalem.

3. The people of Jerusalem are bound to pay the poll-tax as the people of Madain (Ctesiphon) pay it.

4. They are bound to expel the Romans and brigands from [the city].

¹ The Arabic على ان denotes the other side of the bargain: i. e. they gain immunity from plunder and freedom to trade.

² No son of Zubair named Muḥammad is known to history.

³ The use of pronouns here and elsewhere is irregular, but the sense is generally clear.

5. Whosoever [of the Romans, &c.] goes away, shall be safe in person and property until they reach their own place of safety; and whoever remains shall be safe and under the same obligation as the people of Jerusalem to pay the poll-tax.

6. Whosoever of the people of Jerusalem prefers to take his goods and to depart along with the Romans, and leave their churches and crosses, they shall be safe in person until they reach their own place of security.

7. Whosoever of the people of the country was in Jerusalem before the fighting, if he wish to settle, on him are binding the same terms as on the people of Jerusalem, the poll-tax; and if he wishes to depart with the Romans or to return to his own people [he may do so].

8. Nothing shall be taken from them (i. e. the people of the treaty) until the harvest is gathered.

9. For what is in this treaty stands the pledge and warranty of God, the warranty of His Prophet, the warranty of the Caliph, and the warranty of the Faithful, provided that they pay the due amount of the poll-tax.

Witnesses, Khālid ibn Walīd, 'Amr ibn al 'Aṣī, 'Abd ar Raḥmān ibn 'Aūf, and Mu'awīah ibn Abī Sufiān.

Though on the whole I have taken Dr. Lane-Poole's translation, I have thought it better to arrange and number the clauses, and in cl. 1 to 6 I have made verbal changes; but in cl. 7 and 8 I have given what I think is the right translation in correction of Dr. Lane-Poole's rendering, which seems

to miss the sense completely—indeed to make no sense at all. He renders :

‘And whoso of the people of the land was in it [Jerusalem] before the fighting, if he wish to settle, on him is binding the like as what [is binding] on the people of Jerusalem, a poll-tax, and if he wishes to depart with the Romans or to return to his own people, nothing shall be taken from them [i. e. in poll-tax] until the harvest is reaped.’

Either the words ‘and if he wishes to depart with the Romans or to return to his own people’ are redundant and should go out of the text; or after them must be understood words like ‘he is free to do so’; or, as I think better, the text must be rendered in the way I have rendered it. In any case a break is required before the words about the collection of the poll-tax, which must be marked off and stand apart, because they obviously apply not to those who depart, *but to all who come under the treaty*. And this provision for collecting the tribute after harvest clearly corresponds to the provision in the Egyptian treaty for the collection after high Nile.

Returning now to the Treaty of Miṣr, one may note that the first clause grants security for the persons, property, and religion of the Christians, thus agreeing with the first clause in the Treaty of Jerusalem.

In cl. 2 I read a similar agreement : for just as the Treaty of Jerusalem prohibits the Jews from dwelling in the Holy City, so the Treaty of Miṣr prohibits the Nubians from settling in Miṣr. But Dr. Lane-Poole will have none of this agreement. He destroys the obvious correspondence by banishing

the Nubians altogethêr from the treaty, reading the Arabic **دوب** (which means *Nubians*) as **دوب** and giving it the entirely novel meaning of *garrisons*:¹ so that he renders cl. 2, 'The garrisons shall not settle among them.' I shall try to show that this rendering is not only wrong but impossible.

Of course I admit that the analogy between the case of the Jews at Jerusalem and that of the Nubians in Egypt at the date of the respective treaties is not very striking. When the Treaty of Jerusalem was concluded, it was but twenty years since the Christians had suffered the massacre by thousands of their women and children, and the plunder and destruction of their churches, at the hands of the Persians; and they remembered that in all this work the Jews had sided with the Persians and had goaded them on to deeds of ferocity. The Christians, therefore, had good reason to bargain for the expulsion of the Jews from the city. Now it cannot be shown that the people of Miṣr had the same reason to bargain for the exclusion of the Nubians from their city; but it can be shown that they had quite sufficient reason to claim protection against the Nubians, and to debar Nubians from settling in the country. Nothing more is required for my argument.

¹ On the mere question of grammar **دوب** may be accented as **دوب**, but there is no authority for its use in the sense of *garrisons* at so early a date, even if it was ever used with that extended meaning. It means literally *times* or *turns*, and so *turns-about*, 'à tour de rôle,' and then in later usage something like a change of guard, or finally a guard-post subject to relief at stated times. But Dozy, whom Dr. Lane-Poole cites in support of his rendering, is altogether against it: q. v.

Dr. Lane-Poole refers to Ṭabarī's statement (or rather tradition) that 'when the Arabs reached 'Ain Shams, the rule was between the Copts and the Nubians',¹ and contends that it is unintelligible: whereas if it be rendered 'between the Copts and the garrisons', and if the garrisons are identified with the Romans, then all is lucid.

Now in the first place I see no difficulty whatever in accepting the obvious sense, 'between the Copts and the Nubians.' One has only to remember that politically Nubia at this time was a powerful and populous kingdom under its own rulers and practically independent of the Roman dominion: while geographically it was conterminous and continuous with Egypt and formed an essential part of the Nile country, with undefined frontiers, or frontiers defined only at a single frontier post, Syene. Nubia even to-day is called the Egyptian Sudan, and what is more likely than that it was pictured in the mind of the early Arab historians as part of Egypt? Indeed, that Ṭabarī so looked upon Nubia is absolutely proved by his own language in this very account of the conquest of Egypt; for he says later—'When the Muslims had conquered Egypt, they sent an expedition against *Egyptian Nubia*.'² This corresponds to our phrase the Egyptian Sudan. Clearly to Ṭabarī then as to us Nubia formed part of Egypt: and he or his informant might say with perfect accuracy that the rule in Egypt was divided between the Egyptians and the Nubians.³

¹ See Trad. E, p. 12 supra.

² p. 2593. See Trad. G, p. 14 supra.

³ There is abundant evidence to show that in Roman times even

It may be asked, were the relations between Nubia and Egypt proper at this time such as to justify the expression? Upon this point Dr. Lane-Poole makes a most astounding statement. 'We read', he says, 'nothing in history about Nubian influence or Nubian settlements in Egypt at least since the Ethiopian dynasty of thirteen hundred years before.'¹ *Aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*; but of all the extraordinary statements ever made by a scholar and historian surely this is one of the strangest and the farthest from the truth.

In making it Dr. Lane-Poole apparently is thinking of the Meroitic dynasty of about 750 B.C., when Nubia was the centre of a great empire, in which Egypt was a mere province. But then and through a long series of reigns 'the culture and religion of the royal family and of the priests was derived from Egypt'.² The Meroitic era proper began in the third century B.C., when the king Ergamenes threw off the bondage of the Egyptian religion and adopted Hellenic culture, as Diodorus relates. Friendly relations with the Ptolemies generally prevailed, and we read of Blemmyes or Nubians born in Egypt and holding much the same position as Greeks born in Egypt.³ 'One of the last acts of Cleopatra was to send Caesarion and her two

the Thebaid was constantly distinguished from Egypt, and that Egypt was described as divided into three provinces, called Egypt proper, the Thebaid, and Libya. See *Accad. dei Lincei, Rendiconti*, 1903, p. 315, and the classical authorities there quoted.

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 236.

² *Oxford Excavations in Nubia: Catalogue of Exhibition of Antiquities*, pp. 1, 2 (Oxford, Holywell Press, 1911).

³ *Karanög, the Romano-Nubian Cemetery*, by C. Leonard

children by Antony down to the south in the hope that in Aethiopia they would find shelter.'¹

But we are concerned mainly with the Roman empire in Egypt. Has Dr. Lane-Poole never heard of Cornelius Gallus at Philae in 29 B. C.? of Queen Candace's expedition to Elephantine? of Gaius Petronius's victories in Nubia and annexation as far as Primis or Kaṣr Ibrīm? About A. D. 250 the Blemmyes invaded Egypt and were not driven back till A. D. 261 by Julius Aemilianus. They soon returned, and actually occupied Coptos and Ptolemais in the Thebaid by a settlement which lasted till their expulsion by Probus in A. D. 276. A few years later Diocletian had the sense to abandon the country south of Syene, and at the same time he transferred the troublesome Nobatae and Noubae from the oasis of Khargah to Nubia, and agreed to pay tribute to both the Blemmyes and the Nobatae. Peace was thus secured for a long time; but in the days of Constantine raids as far north as Sabenna are mentioned. In the fourth century the edict of Theodosius united Nobatae and Blemmyes against the Shenouti and the Coptic Christians of Upper Egypt; and from this time onwards they are constantly found raiding Upper Egypt and the Thebaid² and harrying the Christians; while in the middle of the fifth century 'the Blemmyes were now more than raiders; they were definitely settled in the Thebaid and assumed

Woolley and D. Randall-MacIver, text, p. 88 (University Museum, Philadelphia, 1910), and references to the Rylands Papyri there quoted.

¹ *Karanōg*, p. 85.

² See *Egyptian Exploration Fund Report*, 1903-4: *Christian Egypt*, p. 81. The MS. of Shenouti in the Cairo Museum (8006 in Crum's Catalogue) shows that these invasions were frequent.

in a measure its civil government; the Roman troops that had garrisoned the frontier were prisoners in their hands, and Ptolemais seems to have been the regular base from which their forces terrorized the country to the north'.¹ Maximinus crushed these Nubians in A.D. 453 and concluded a peace which lasted more or less till the time of Justinian; but an extant letter, dated about A.D. 540, to John, Prefect of the East, from a landholder in Upper Egypt complains of two invasions by the Blemmyes in three years. Then followed the well-known missions of Justinian and Theodora which evangelized the Nubatae, whose king Silko warred against the Blemmyes and destroyed them. But Christianity did not change the habits of the Nubians. About A.D. 580 Aristomachus was sent by Tiberius II to chastise the Nubians;² and in the time of the emperor Maurice we find either Nubian troops or troops from Nubia employed in Egypt proper.³

So all through the Roman dominion the relations of Egypt and Nubia were relations of continual hostility, of war and plunder, of invasion and counter-invasion.⁴ And the Muslims in their turn found that the conquest of Nubia did not follow upon the con-

¹ *Karanōg*, p. 96.

² *John of Nikiou*, p. 525 (*Notices et Extraits des Manuscrits, &c.*, t. xxiv, Paris, 1883).

³ *Id.*, p. 531.

⁴ See J. Leipoldt's article written as preface to Rudolph Haupt's *Katalog 5* (Aegyptologie, &c.), pp. viii, ix (Halle a. S., 1905): 'Am allerhässlichsten benahmen sich aber die reichen Herren, wenn ein Einfall der Egoosh (Nubier) drohte. In diesen Zeiten höchster Gefahr pflegten alle nordwärts zu fliehen . . . Die ägyptische Regierung schon im vierten und fünften Jahrhundert recht machtlos war: nicht einmal ihre Soldaten hatte sie in der Gewalt, und die Verhinderung von Nubiereinfällen gelang ihr nur selten.'

quest of Egypt; for Ṭabarī himself relates the failure of the expedition which 'Amr made against Nubia, as soon as Egypt was subjugated.

I claim therefore to have shown that, during the whole of the thirteen hundred years in which Dr. Lane-Poole alleges that Nubian influence and Nubian settlements were unknown in Egypt, the tide of war had rolled over the land between Nubia and Egypt, ebbing and flowing at irregular intervals but with ceaseless recurrence; that Nubia was a thorn in the side of the Romans all through their dominion in Egypt, as it was a thorn in the side of the Muslims long after they had conquered Egypt; and that, so far from Nubian settlements being unknown in Egypt, it had been the regular policy and practice of the Nubians to crown a successful invasion by a settled occupation in Upper Egypt. It was therefore perfectly natural that at the time of the Arab invasion the people of Miṣr should bargain for protection against Nubian settlements.

If this is not enough to prove that *Nūb* in the treaty has its ordinary sense of *Nubians*, let us consider the consequences of adopting Dr. Lane-Poole's rendering *garrisons*. I have already taken the broad ground that, as the Roman Empire had been established in Egypt for at least seven hundred years, it is a mistake to speak of Egypt in A.D. 640 as a country held by alien Roman 'garrisons' and an alien 'Roman army of occupation'. Such phrases fly in the face of history.¹ But further: if 'Amr

¹ The Roman army in Egypt was largely recruited from the native inhabitants: see *The Garrison of Egypt under the Roman Empire*, by Mr. Cheeseman in *Karanōg*, pp. 106-14.

meant *garrisons*, why did not he use the common Arabic word for *garrison*, حرسية? Again, if the Romans in Egypt are described as garrisons in the Treaty of Miṣr, why are they not so described, and why is the term *Nūb* not used, in the Treaty of Jerusalem? And if the term *garrisons* in the Treaty of Miṣr is equivalent to *Romans*, why does that treaty speak of 'Romans *and* garrisons', thus making a distinction between them? But the climax of absurdity is reached when we come to the last clause (11) in the treaty, which provides that the 'garrisons' are to furnish so many head of cattle or sheep¹ and so many horses, and are to receive in return full freedom for trade to and from Egypt. What can this mean if the 'garrisons' are the Romans?

Dr. Lane-Poole sees the difficulty. 'The last clause relating to the garrisons', he remarks, 'is not very intelligible,' and he proceeds to quote what he calls Weil's translation as follows: 'And (it is binding) on the *garrisons* who consent (to this treaty) that they shall help the Muslims with so many men and so many horses that they (*the Nūb*) be not hindered from trade, coming or going.' Notice that Dr. Lane-Poole takes upon himself to substitute 'garrisons' for Weil's 'Nubians', and yet does not hesitate to change that inconvenient word back to 'Nūb' or Nubians in his own gloss explaining the pronoun 'they'! We may correct this procedure, and see what results. The clause will then run, according to the *garrisons* theory, as follows: 'The

¹ This rendering is more probably correct than 'head of men', i. e. soldiers.

garrisons who come under this treaty are bound to furnish so many head (of cattle or men) and so many horses, so that the garrisons may trade freely, coming and going'—which is very like nonsense. Dr. Lane-Poole argues that 'the clause may be understood to provide for a limited escort of friendly Romans to protect the caravans trading between Egypt and Syria; but such a provision appears extremely improbable'. Not only improbable, but impossible: it is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the *garrisons* theory.

But if, as I contend, *Nūb* means *Nubians*, then it is the Nubians in Egypt who have to furnish cattle and horses (possibly a contingent of horse and foot) and who are to be protected in their trade across the desert to Nubia. The trade in ivory and other products of the Sudan was much the same then as now, and as much exposed to danger from Beduin and brigands.¹ The Arabs too were strangers to the country, and they may have foreseen the requirement of a corps of local guides to aid in patrolling the southern and western deserts. So interpreted therefore the provision in the treaty is both intelligible and natural. Last but not least, the other Muslim historians who quote or comment on the

¹ Juvenal, for example, mentions the ivory trade: 'Dentibus ex illis quos mittit porta Syenes.' See also *England in the Sudan*, by Yakūb Pasha Artīn, p. 8 (Macmillan, 1911): 'All these temples and fortresses, whose ruins alone remain, could not have been constructed in deserts such as we see to-day. There must have existed from remotest times a considerable trade, at least a transport trade, between the Sudan and Egypt. Certain it is that there were wars both of a defensive and of an aggressive nature from at least the time of the twelfth dynasty.'

treaty never doubt for a moment that *Nūb* means *Nubians*. Thus Ibn al Athīr says, 'In this treaty even the Romans and Nubians inhabiting Egypt were included as forming part of the population of the country.'¹

So much for the strange theory of the 'garrisons'.

It remains to notice one or two other points in the treaty. Clause 2 seems to fix the total amount of poll-tax, 'provided that the people of Mişr accept the treaty and the river reaches its full level,' at 50,000,000—but the coin is not specified. I can hardly think Dr. Lane-Poole correct in taking this as *dirhems*. The evidence of practically all the Arab writers agrees that the tax was stated in *dinars*—two dinars a head, old men, women, and children being excluded. Clearly, however, 50,000,000 dinars cannot have been intended: that would imply 25,000,000 able-bodied men in the population, which is absurd. But if 5,000,000 be substituted for 50,000,000 by a very slight change in the text (خمسين for خمسة), that would imply a taxable population of 2,500,000, which might be a fair rough estimate of numbers for the whole of Egypt at the time of the treaty. But whichever way the total of tribute be taken (*dirhems* or *dinars*), a great difficulty arises: because it is certain that any such total must refer not to a section but to the whole population of Egypt. In other words, 'the people of Mişr' in this clause must mean, not the people of the city of Mişr, but the people of Egypt. Yet

¹ Ibn al Athīr, *Chronicon quod perfectissimum inscribitur*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, Leyden, 1868-74, p. 441.

we have seen that it was the people of the city who were parties to the treaty; and *اهل مصر* cannot mean two different things in the same document. The only solution is to regard the numeral 50,000,000 (or 5,000,000) as a marginal gloss which has crept into the text. This solution commends itself the more as there is no total of poll-tax specified in the Treaty of Jerusalem. Caetani (p. 309) says that the omission of any capitation tax is one of the points in favour of the treaty, because under Omar the two dinars per head was not known—only a lump sum being fixed. It also seems *a priori* most unlikely that the Arab commander would bind himself to accept an off-hand estimate furnished by the Romans, who would have every motive for reducing the total. It must further be remembered that Ṭabarī's words immediately following the treaty run:—'So the people of Miṣr, all of them, entered into those covenants and accepted the treaty, and the horses were collected.' It is quite certain that the whole population of *Egypt* did not enter upon this treaty. Moreover, the collection of horses is recorded as an incident in close connexion with the acceptance of the treaty; and whether it refers to horses which the Nubians had to furnish, or, as seems more probable, to horses at once available and supplied by the people of the city, it shows the limited scope of the treaty at the moment. It obviously cannot refer to a collection of horses from all quarters of Egypt: for it is absolutely beyond question that, at the time when the Treaty of Miṣr was concluded, the Muslims had effected next to nothing in Upper Egypt, while the whole

of the Delta was still Roman and could not be described as coming under the treaty. Ṭabarī's own words¹ make doubt on this point impossible, apart from the overwhelming evidence of other Arab writers and of John of Nikiou: and Dr. Lane-Poole virtually agrees.² Everything therefore seems to support the theory that the '50,000,000', which hangs very loosely on the text, is a gloss which should be removed.

One other point. The position of cl. 11 is curious and obviously suggests some kind of afterthought. Yet if this provision were a mere interpolation by a later writer, why should it be placed between the warranty clause and the attestation clause? It would have been more natural, and just as easy, for an interpolator to insert his fictitious addition somewhere in the body of the treaty. Indeed it might be argued, that the abnormal position of the clause is actually a point in its favour: though the same cannot be said of its obscurity.

Leaving, however, all criticism of the text, one may now sum up the conclusions reached about the treaty. It was a treaty made not with the Copts but with the Romans: it concerned primarily the population of the city of Mişr, whom it ruled out as belligerents and brought under tribute, giving in return protection and religious liberty: it secured to the Arabs possession of the largest city in Egypt after Alexandria: it released their forces for the campaign

¹ See Tradition B, p. 9 supra.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 235: 'At the time of the treaty only a small part of the country was subdued, and most of the country was in Roman hands.'

in the Delta: and it gave to the still unconquered towns and provinces of Upper and Lower Egypt a model of the conditions under which the Muslims were ready to grant peace together with security for life, property, and religion.

IV. *The Authenticity of the Treaty.*

UP to this point I have assumed the genuineness of the treaty, with some reserve, in order to deal with Dr. Lane-Poole's arguments as founded on that assumption. But while Dr. Lane-Poole regards the treaty as textually accurate and unquestionably authentic, it must not be concealed that other oriental scholars regard it as for the most part spurious. Contrast the almost sacrosanct regard in which Dr. Lane-Poole holds the document with what Wellhausen says of the whole Saifian traditions.¹ Indeed, Wellhausen in his brief study of the conquest, written before my work and Dr. Lane-Poole's article, does not directly mention this treaty; while Caetani, the latest, fullest, and most searching writer on the subject, definitely decides that both the Treaty of Jerusalem and the Treaty of Miṣr are in the main apocryphal.²

The truth probably lies somewhat short of this extreme opinion. But one thing is certain: either the Treaty of Miṣr is spurious or its historical setting is wrong. It is absolutely impossible that the treaty as it stands can have been concluded by Al Muḩauḩis upon the surrender of Babylon and by him referred

¹ *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, vi. 94. See also his general remarks on the early Mohammedan writings in iv. of the same series.

² Caetani, pp. 300, 306-8.

to Heraclius. Every modern authority agrees that John of Nikiou's evidence upon the date of the surrender is final. That date is 9 April, 641, and at that date Al Muḩauḩis was not in Egypt and Heraclius was dead.

If, therefore, the treaty is genuine, it must have got into a wrong context. For in its present form it cannot possibly be identified with the Treaty of Alexandria, which John of Nikiou records: and alternatively, if it can be identified as a confused reminiscence of that treaty, the text cannot be regarded as authentic. To what then could it relate, if genuine? John of Nikiou shows clearly that the capture of the city of Mişr was anterior to the fall of Babylon, though all details of that capture are lost with the lost chapter of which the heading alone remains. Balādhurī also makes it clear that in the conquest of Egypt there were two treaties,¹ one merely local and temporary, the other marking the final triumph of the Arabs and settling the terms for the surrender of the country by the Romans. If Ṭabarī's treaty can be identified with the minor treaty recorded by Balādhurī, it would not run counter to anything in John of Nikiou, and in spite of some

¹ Caetani, p. 251, where Balādhurī is quoted, and Caetani comments as follows: 'In questa tradizione si osservino due cose: in primo luogo che s'ignora il nome di al Muḩawḩis e che lo si chiama il signore di Alyūnah senz' altre specificazioni. Si parla poi di due trattati ben distinti, e qui noi scorgiamo memoria dei due trattati, l'uno concluso alla presa di Babilonia con il signore della fortezza (Saḩib Alyūnah), e l'altro non specificato ulteriormente, ma senza dubbio quello di Alessandria, stipulato da Ciro.'

The term *Al Yūnah* comes of course from Bab-al-yūn (Gate of Al Yūn), the form of Babylon which Arab writers got from a mistaken etymology.

difficulties might claim at least a measure of authenticity.

But the conclusions of Caetani are too important to pass over lightly. Dr. Lane-Poole, he remarks,¹ does not avail himself of the precious information of Balādhuri: he ignores Wellhausen's criticisms and he regards all the authorities as of equal value. We find Saif displaying very imperfect knowledge of events in Egypt as in Syria, and arbitrarily filling the gaps with elements in part only good and flung together in wild disorder. The treaty, therefore, appears in bad company, and we may suspect that the text of the treaty is as disordered as the text of the narrative. The last article, no. 11, is a rock on which the theory of absolute authenticity must split. Nubians in the treaty are an anachronism, and this article must be an interpolation taken from a subsequent treaty between Arabs and Nubians after the conquest of Upper Egypt. 'Hence the treaty', continues Caetani, 'is not the authentic text of the Treaty of Miṣr, but a text in which authorities of the Persian school are mingled with elements, in part ancient and perhaps contemporary with the conquest, of different provenance.' He proceeds to argue that article 2 cannot be of the time of the conquest: apart, however, from articles 2 and 11 the treaty has some genuine character. Moreover, the omission of the amount of the poll-tax per head is against it: but while some of the conditions recall those of the treaty of Alexandria as given by John of Nikiou, the main terms for the surrender of Egypt have little or nothing in common.

¹ *Id.*, p. 308.

Finally he concludes that the Treaty of Jerusalem and Treaty of Mişr are both mainly apocryphal, though parts may be taken from ancient and authentic documents. In both we have to note the intermixture of authentic conditions with apocryphal and with others which, being common to all treaties, have no special value. 'Generally these two treaties are artificial compositions of a later age with elements of various origin and diverse value. The historian must not ignore them, but must not found upon their slender support any important conclusion.'¹

Such is Caetani's opinion. I do not agree with his sweeping judgement, nor does it seem founded so much upon argument as upon assertion. The articles 2 and 11, which are cited in condemnation of the Treaty of Mişr as anachronistic, I have already shown above to be justified historically; and though I agree that the sum total of the poll-tax given in the treaty must be wrong, no great stress can be laid upon an error in arithmetic in Arab documents. It seems to me also that both the points of agreement and the points of difference in the two treaties (Jerusalem and Mişr) suggest a higher measure of authenticity in the text than Caetani is disposed to admit, although I fully concur with him in thinking the whole narrative in Ṭabarī, or in the Saifian tradition, hopelessly disordered.

Beyond that, sure ground does not lie. Wellhausen accuses Saif of filling the gaps in his narrative with idle romancing (*Kannegiesserei*) and calls his narrative legendary. But the story of Zubair's escalade, for example, which Caetani would place

¹ Caetani, p. 310.

in that category, seems well enough attested, though the setting is doubtful. On the whole I am unable to accept Caetani's criticisms except in so far as I have here admitted their justice, or to base upon them any subversive modifications of the general narrative of events as set out in my eighteenth chapter of the *Arab Conquest of Egypt*.

But while I am disposed to think the treaty possibly in its main outline authentic, I confess that its exact position in the history is exceedingly difficult to determine. I have already shown that Ṭabarī intended beyond all question to associate the treaty with the surrender of Babylon, i.e. *Ḳaṣr ash Sham'a*: Balādhurī seems also to associate his first treaty with the surrender of Babylon or *Ḳaṣr ash Sham'a*. It is reasonable to suppose, and unreasonable to doubt, that these two treaties refer to the same event. Either then the Treaty of Miṣr must be regarded as that made in October at the time of high Nile—the abortive treaty which I have described in the *Arab Conquest*¹—or it must be taken as relating to the capitulation of the city of Miṣr, as opposed to that of the fortress of Babylon—the capitulation which is barely recorded in a chapter-heading by John of Nikiou, but of which the whole description and detail are lost. The balance of evidence is perhaps in favour of the latter hypothesis: but no historian has yet issued from that inextricable labyrinth which the Arab writers have built around the central facts of the conquest with a key to its mysteries.

¹ p. 262.

V. *The Identity of Al Muḳauḳis.*

IN dealing above with the parties to the treaty I have mentioned Al Muḳauḳis many times without diverting the argument to discuss the question of his identity. But Dr. Lane-Poole challenges my identification of him with Cyrus, the imperial patriarch and viceroy, and it is time to take up the challenge. Though most competent scholars both in Europe and in Egypt have accepted my theory at least in part, I have no wish to take shelter under their authority, or to regard it as outweighing Dr. Lane-Poole's criticisms: which I now proceed to examine.

After citing my evidence on the Coptic side (Severus, the Synaxarium, the Life of Samuel of Ḳalamūn) Dr. Lane-Poole says:

'Supposing these translations to be accurate, and supposing the MSS., which are chiefly late, to be faithful transcripts of early authoritative documents—a matter which I am not qualified to decide—these extracts taken together show that Cyrus and the Muḳauḳis were one and the same person in the opinion of the writers. This can hardly be contested. The only question is whether the writers were authoritative.'¹ 'The whole question turns on the relative credibility of two or three Coptic authorities and the whole series of Arabic historians.'² If we had nothing but these Coptic and Ethiopic data to

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 250.

² *Id.*, p. 252.

go upon, the identification might perhaps be taken as proved. But when we look at the long series of Arabic writers, not only those who survive, but many who are cited by survivors but whose original writings are lost, and when we fail to find the slightest hint that any one of them suspected Al Muḳauḳis and Cyrus to be the same person, I confess that their evidence, negative as it is, seems to me overwhelming. How is it that not one of them says that Al Muḳauḳis was a priest, much less an archbishop? Why do they give him the name of George, son of Mīnā, or son of Ḳurḳub, if his real name was Cyrus?¹ Why does Abū Ṣaliḥ, who was a Christian, and wrote about A. D. 1200, state that Heraclius placed the government of Egypt under "George, the son of Mīnā, Al Muḳauḳis", and also cite the book of Janāḥ for the fact that "the bishop of the Romans at Miṣr and Alexandria was named Cyrus"? How is it that not a single historian of Egypt, Muslim or Christian, has said in so many words "Al Muḳauḳis was a title or nickname given to the patriarch Cyrus"?²

I have set out these extracts at some length because I am anxious to present Dr. Lane-Poole's argument fairly and fully. Briefly, then, he seeks to discredit the very positive evidence from Coptic sources, and he sets against it the negative results from Arabic sources—the silence and the confusion on the subject among Arabic historians.

Now first of all as to the Arabic writers. Of course this negative argument has a good deal of

¹ جرجس George, and قيروس Cyrus are not very unlike.

² Id., p. 253.

plausibility about it, but it does not prove much more than that among Arabic historians there exists on the question the greatest uncertainty and perplexity, and in their statements they show the greatest inconsistency: the one is the result of the other. But if there is anything certain, it is that the Arab writers caught the name Al Muḳauḳis by hearsay or tradition one from another without understanding it; that the name prevailed among them to the exclusion, or the confusion, of the personal name of the official to whom it belonged; and that the name was a vague title of non-Arabic origin denoting the ruler of Egypt. They call the ruler of Egypt in the time of Mohammed Al Muḳauḳis, and they call the ruler of Egypt at the time of the conquest Al Muḳauḳis. It matters little for my argument whether the name was first used by the Arabs in connexion with Mohammed's mission and applied by analogy to the governor-general at the time of the conquest; or whether (as I think) it was first heard at the time of the conquest and applied by error to the governor-general who received Mohammed's mission. In either case the term denoted the viceroy of the Roman emperor or the governor-general in Egypt. Seeing the consequences which would flow from an admission of this fact, Dr. Lane-Poole tries to escape them in the following manner:

‘Such is Dr. Butler's positive evidence. The coincidences upon which he also relies are the statements on the one hand that Cyrus, on the other that Al Muḳauḳis, was governor of Egypt under Heraclius; the statements of the Greek historians and John of Nikiou that Cyrus made peace with the Arabs, and

those of the Arabic historians that Al Muḩauḩis made peace with them. But these coincidences may be explained by the hypothesis that Al Muḩauḩis was the sub-governor who made the peace, and Cyrus the patriarch and supreme governor who accepted his subordinate's arrangement and reported it to the emperor.¹

In order, therefore, to avoid the identification of Al Muḩauḩis with Cyrus, Dr. Lane-Poole has to identify him, not with the governor-general of Egypt, but with some sub-governor: and this hypothesis he further develops to the conclusion that 'So far as the Arabic evidence goes, except for his name, Al Muḩauḩis may have been Theodore', i. e. the military governor at Alexandria. Clearly if the Muḩauḩis's name was Theodore, he was not 'George, son of Mīnā': but the fact is that 'George, son of Mīnā' fits no person and fits no theory in this strange eventful chronicle, and must be regarded as erroneous. But let us examine the Arabic writers' evidence, and see in what language they describe Al Muḩauḩis. Now dealing first with Ṭabarī, it cannot be denied that he distinguishes in one tradition² between Al Muḩauḩis and the *katholikos of Miṣr*. The question is what the latter phrase means. The term *katholikos* is not and never was a term rightly applicable to any church dignitary in Egypt. It is an Armenian, or Syrian, or Nestorian term, made familiar to Ṭabarī in Ṭabaristān or in Baghdad, and misapplied to Egypt. No doubt it means 'metropolitan', *but it does not necessarily*

¹ *P. R. I. A.*, p. 252.

² See Tradition D *supra*, p. 11.

mean 'patriarch'.¹ Further, we have seen that *Mişr* has the double sense of *Egypt* and the *city of Mişr*. It follows that the phrase *katholikos of Mişr*, for which Dr. Lane-Poole and others usually give the impossible rendering *patriarch of Egypt*, may mean nothing more or less than *metropolitan of the city of Mişr*. That there was a metropolitan of Mişr distinct from the patriarch is probable: for it is known that there was a bishop of Mişr, and the title frequently occurs in Coptic history.² There was also a bishop of Babylon, or 'bishop of the Castle of Babylon',³ a bishop of Memphis, a bishop of Ḥulwān; and the bishop of Mişr doubtless had precedence over all bishops in the locality. Moreover, the title of metropolitan was given to the bishop of Damietta; and it is difficult to conceive that the bishop of Mişr—the capital city after Alexandria—was of less importance and lower dignity, as would be the case, if he had not the rank of metropolitan. I may add that I have spoken of *patriarch of Egypt* as an impossible rendering, because it is an impossible title. The patriarch was patriarch of Alexandria: that was the invariable title. Such a title as *patriarch of Mişr* or *patriarch of Egypt* is absolutely unknown, and to use it is as

¹ Al Birūnī, speaking of the melkite Syrian Christians, defines *Katholikos* thus: Arabic *Jāthalik*. The residence of the *katholikos* of the Melkites in Muslim countries is Baghdad. He is *under the patriarch of Antioch* (ed. C. E. Sachau, London, 1879, pp. 283-4). So the *katholikos* of the Armenian Church was appointed originally from Caesarea, and had not even the specific rank of metropolitan. To-day there are four *katholikoi* in Armenia.

² See for example, *Abū Ṣaliḥ*, pp. 92, 121, 138.

³ *Arab Conquest*, p. 173.

absurd as to speak of the archbishop of England. On the other hand, the title *metropolitan of Miṣr* does not rest on mere conjecture. I have found it actually used about A.D. 750, when one Theodore is described as the metropolitan bishop of Miṣr.¹

If this explanation is adopted, all difficulty arising from the distinction between the *katholikos* and Al Muḳauḳis vanishes: they were two different persons, and no one has ever contended that the bishop of Miṣr was Al Muḳauḳis. And the difficulty about the name Abū Maryām also vanishes. I would no longer say that the name is impossible—an erroneous assertion in which Dr. Lane-Poole follows me:² all I would say is that it is doubtful in this context. I would point out—what has not been noticed before, I think—that the same name is given to the Christian pervert at Balḥīb in Ṭabarī's own story of the surrender of Alexandria—'Abdallah 'Abd ar Raḥmān *Abū Maryām*, where the forenames are clearly the Islamic additions.³ The name therefore is possible: but the fact that we have Abū Maryām the metropolitan, Abū Maryām the bishop, and again Abū Maryām the pervert, unquestionably establishes a confusion which renders the whole of this nomenclature very uncertain. But if it was the metropolitan of Miṣr and another bishop who met 'Amr, there is nothing inconsistent with my theory in Ṭabarī's statement that they were sent by Al Muḳauḳis and returned to him: indeed the story then fits together admirably.⁴

¹ تادرس المترانوس اسقف مصر in *Hist. Pat.* (*Patr. Orient.* t. v. fasc. 1), p. 106.

² *P. R. I. A.*, p. 243.

³ See Trad. B, p. 10, supra.

⁴ I should say that I have frankly abandoned the explanation of

Before quitting Ṭabarī, however, I must point out a discrepancy in his evidence. For whereas in the one tradition he says that when 'Amr, reinforced by Zubair, met Abū Maryam and Abū Maryām, they fought with him ;¹ in the other he says 'When 'Amr and Al Muḩauḩis met at 'Ain Shams, their armies began to fight'.² That these two statements refer to one and the same incident, does not in my opinion admit of reasonable doubt. It is one more illustration of the necessity of considering the various traditions in Ṭabarī in their isolation as well as in their union. But if the incident is the same, and if one tradition alleges that it was the katholikos of Mişr, while another alleges that it was Al Muḩauḩis, whose meeting with 'Amr was followed by the battle at 'Ain Shams, or the battle of Heliopolis, then it follows that the Muḩauḩis may be identified with the katholikos of Mişr, and the katholikos of Mişr may be the metropolitan of Egypt, or in other words the Patriarch Cyrus. In that case, however, the tradition which separates Cyrus from Al Muḩauḩis must be so far mistaken. And it must be remembered that equal authority cannot attach to inconsistent traditions. One must choose between them on a balance of evidence.

the name Abū Maryām which I gave in the *Arab Conquest* (p. 513). It cannot be identified with the name Benjamin. Historically it is certain that Benjamin was in retreat in the desert till after the Muslim power was established in Egypt : and philologically I accept Caetani's objection that the names *Ibn Yāmīn* and *Maryām* were both so well known to the Arabs that confusion between them is very improbable. I may add that the very name Abū Maryām is found, in the Aphrodito papyri (MS. 1448, Brit. Mus. Catalogue), dating from about A.D. 700.

¹ p. 2584.

² p. 2592.

Ṭabarī's testimony, however, rightly interpreted, not only harmonizes rather than clashes with my theory, but actually supports it. I may add that there is not a word in his whole story suggesting or justifying the identification of Al Muḳauḳis with any subordinate officer of the empire whatever.

Let us now see whether other Arabic historians bear out Dr. Lane-Poole's contention. There is an important passage in Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam (c. A. D. 850) which, so far as I know, has not been noticed in this connexion :

فوجّه هرقل ملك الروم كما ذتى شيخ من اهل مصر
المقوقس اميراً على مصر وجمل اليه حربها وجباية
خراجها ونزل الاسكندرية¹

Which means that Heraclius, the Roman emperor, deputed Al Muḳauḳis as viceroy over Egypt with full military power and with control of the revenue or taxes. What can such a position mean but one of supreme authority? In naming Al Muḳauḳis as controller of the revenue Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam is not only supported by Eutychius² (A. D. 876-939) among Arabic writers, but he is in most remarkable agreement with the seventh-century Coptic document,³ which in recounting the visit of πρωτχιος $\text{πεπσετοαρχνεπισκοπος}$ (i. e. the Muḳauḳis, the

¹ This is in the part published by Karle, p. 55 of the Arabic text (Göttingen, 1856, 4to).

² For quotation and reference see below, p. 80.

³ *MSS. Copt.*, Clar. Press, p. 5, published in Amélineau's *Vie de Samuel de Kalamim*. See *Arab Conquest*, p. 518; but I did not know of the passage in Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam when that page was written.

sham archbishop), to the monastery of Ẓalamūn makes the archbishop claim the title of 'controller of the revenue of the land of Egypt'. Such a coincidence must carry great weight. Now this same incident is also recounted in the Arabic version of Coptic Synaxarium,¹ and there the person who tried to make Samuel confess the Chalcedonian or melkite form of belief is called definitely Al Muḳauḳis—a clear proof that $\mu\alpha\tau\chi\iota\omicron\varsigma$ is the Coptic original of الموقوس —and one MS. adds to the name Al Muḳauḳis 'the patriarch'. The person then who claimed the title of Controller of the Revenue is proved by these two Coptic documents to be the Muḳauḳis just as Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam alleges, and is also proved to be the melkite archbishop and patriarch—or Cyrus.

But there is a further striking correspondence

¹ *Synaxaire Arabe Jacobite*, par René Basset, in *Patrol. Orient.* . iii. fasc. 3, p. 406. The authority of this Arabic version has been impugned by Dr. Lane-Poole on the ground of its lateness. The truth is that it embodies traditions and records from the earliest times, with late additions. I may perhaps give one example proving its remarkable accuracy. On p. 326 of t. i, in Basset's edition, is an account of an eclipse which occurred in 958 of the era of the Martyrs (29 Aug. 1241–28 Aug. 1242), and which, being on 6th October, fell in 1241, and not, as Basset says, in 1242. The description of the eclipse is such as to preclude any other than a total eclipse, and the writer clearly depicts totality at Alexandria. When I asked the astronomers to verify the statement, I was told that Oppolzer's chart shows the line of totality along the north of Asia Minor, and therefore far away from Alexandria. But the description of totality at Alexandria was so unmistakable, that I had the matter referred to Greenwich Observatory, where a rough calculation was made, correcting Oppolzer, and showing the line of totality as passing through Alexandria. Thus the historical accuracy of this record in the *Synaxarium* is completely vindicated.

between Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam and another quite independent authority. The Arabic historian makes two statements about Al Muḥauḳis, the one emphasizing his military, the other his fiscal authority. On the fiscal side, we have clear confirmation from Coptic documents; on the military side I now give a curious confirmation from a seventh-century Syriac document which has not very long come to light. The *Chronicon Anonymum*, translated and edited by Guidi and published among the *Chronica Minora*,¹ was written in the seventh century shortly after the subjugation of Egypt, and it declares that the Arabs were deterred at first from the invasion because the frontiers of Egypt were defended with a large and powerful army *by the patriarch of Alexandria*. Such a statement would sound almost incredible, if it stood alone: how could an archbishop control these purely military measures? But if the patriarch at this time was Cyrus, as is not denied, and if Cyrus was Al Muḥauḳis, then the assertion of the very early Syriac document exactly tallies with Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam's description of the viceroy as clothed with full military power.

So much, then, for Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam. It is obviously impossible to deny that he represents Al Muḥauḳis as sent to Egypt by Heraclius with

¹ *Corpus Script. Hist. Orient.—Scriptores Syri*: Ser. iii, t. iv, p. 31 'Potiti sunt Arabes tota regione Syriae et Palestinae. Aegyptum quoque ingredi in animo erat, sed non valuerunt: *custodiebantur enim fines exercitu magno et vi, a patriarcha Alexandrino*'. Guidi remarks that the Chronicle as it stands may be dated with certainty A. D. 670-80, though parts seem older, and that it was the work of a Nestorian monk.

full civil and military power ; that such a description cannot conceivably apply to any subordinate official ; and that the evidence of this Arabic writer is most remarkably confirmed by independent Coptic and Syriac documents almost or actually contemporary with the conquest.

Al Balādhurī (A.D. 806–93) is not very definite about Al Muḳauḳis. But he represents him as having concluded peace with ‘Amr under a treaty which Heraclius repudiated—presumably the treaty of Mişr ; as subsequently in command at Alexandria during the siege ; and as again negotiating with ‘Amr for the surrender of that city. There is no word in this writer to support the assumption that the Muḳauḳis was a subordinate official : indeed Balādhurī’s account is in close agreement with John of Nikiou’s account of Cyrus.

Al Y’aḳūbī (died A.D. 873), who was not an Egyptian, makes the Muḳauḳis conclude peace with ‘Amr—a peace which Heraclius repudiated.

Ibn al Athīr (A.D. 1160–1232) seems to follow Ṭabarī ; but he describes Abū Maryam, who was sent by Al Muḳauḳis to meet ‘Amr, as *katholikos of Memphis*, clearly showing that he understood the expression *katholikos of Mişr* as referring to the bishop of the city of Mişr and not to the patriarch of Alexandria. There is therefore nothing inconsistent in Ibn al Athīr’s evidence with the theory identifying Al Muḳauḳis with Cyrus. I may add that bishop and archbishop were not very clearly distinguished by Arab writers. Thus Abu ’l Maḥāsin, who speaks of Abū Maryam as *katholikos of Mişr*, also speaks of Benjamin as bishop of

Alexandria. So the phrase *bishop of Rome* is not unknown in history. But Ibn al Athīr represents the Muḩauḩis as ordering battle to be given at 'Ain Shams on the advice of the military tribune; as negotiating later at Alexandria; and as making peace with the Arabs. This Arabic historian then in no way countenances the theory that the Muḩauḩis could be a subordinate officer.

Yaḩūt (A.D. 1178-1229) makes the Muḩauḩis the author of the peace on behalf of Copts and Romans and subject to the emperor's approval—evidence that he was in the writer's opinion viceroy of Egypt.

Al Makīn (A.D. 1205-73) says that Al Muḩauḩis was 'governor of Egypt in the name of Heraclius', i. e. viceroy.

Ibn Duḩmāḩ (c. A.D. 1350-1406) cites Ibn Wahb as quoting Al Laith ibn S'ad as follows: 'Al Muḩauḩis, the Roman, who was viceroy (مولى) of Egypt, made terms of peace with 'Amr.'

Maḩrīzī (A.D. 1365-1442) quotes Yazīd ibn Abī ḩabīb as saying that 'Al Muḩauḩis, the Roman, being governor of Egypt, made peace with 'Amr'; and 'the fort', i. e. Babylon, 'was commanded by Al U'airig under the authority of the Muḩauḩis'; and of the Muḩauḩis again 'he governed the country for the emperor Heraclius'. He also made the Treaty of Miṣr, which the emperor repudiated, 'reproaching *his representative* with imitating the cowardice and meanness of the Egyptians,' &c. There is no shadow of doubt that Al Maḩrīzī regarded Al Muḩauḩis as viceroy of Egypt.

Abu 'l Maḩāsin (A.D. 1411-69) says that 'the

commander of Kaşr ash Sham'a (i. e. fortress of Babylon) was 'Ughairig, who was subordinate to Al Muḳauḳis'.¹ The same writer says again, 'Then began the siege of the fortress, which was commanded by Al Mandafūr² on behalf of Al Muḳauḳis, ibn Kaḳab al Yunānī.' Again he speaks of 'the principal Egyptians with their governor Al Muḳauḳis'. There was no question of an inferior official in the judgement of Abu 'l Maḥāsin.

With him As Suyūṭī (A. D. 1445-1505) is in general agreement: 'The emperor Heraclius repudiated the agreement made by Al Muḳauḳis with the Arabs,' and so forth.

In order to meet Dr. Lane-Poole's statement that, so far as the Arabic evidence goes, Al Muḳauḳis might be 'sub-governor' or some official under the governor-general of Egypt, I have reviewed the evidence and selected definitions of his authority and position from the principal Arabic historians from Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam down to As Suyūṭī. And what is the result? They one and all either describe him as ملك king or viceroy, and أمير, prince or governor-general, or else they describe his office in terms which cannot possibly apply to any but the supreme authority in Egypt. The Arabic historians, therefore, can only be taken to prove that the Muḳauḳis was Heraclius' viceroy in Egypt; and they totally fail to support any theory which would

¹ Two MSS. give the name of the Muḳauḳis as جرنج or جرنج ibn Mīnā. Clearly the name has been transferred from the commander of the fortress to the Muḳauḳis by error.

² Probably μανδάτωρ, as I have shown. See *Arab Conquest*, p. 513.

assign to him any subordinate position. He was ruler of the country, deputed by the emperor, exactly as Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam alleges.

So much seems fairly established. But if Dr. Lane-Poole was driven to the theory that Al Muḳauḳis held a subordinate position as the only way of avoiding the identification of Al Muḳauḳis with Cyrus, and if that theory has been proved totally irreconcilable with the evidence of the Arabic historians on which he relied, then Dr. Lane-Poole's position has become altogether untenable.

But his argument had two divisions—one, that the Arabic evidence told against the identification of Cyrus with the Muḳauḳis, the other that the Coptic evidence was unworthy of credit. On the first I have rebutted his contention: I now will deal with his attempt to discredit the Coptic authorities. It is quite true that I said in the *Arab Conquest of Egypt*¹ that the historical value of certain Coptic documents which I named is not very great; but the saying is quoted somewhat unfairly against me. The reason I gave was that the writers, 'where they might have told us so much, furnish only a few scanty and incidental allusions to contemporary history'; but it is obviously most unjust to reject the historical material which Coptic authorities do afford on the ground that they do not afford more. In these documents the allusions to matters of history are clearly unstudied, and when they relate to contemporary events, they are of unquestionable value. I have already dwelt on the Bodleian seventh-century Coptic MS. recounting the visit of

¹ Pref. p. x.

the melkite archbishop to the monastery of Ƙalamūn, and I have shown how it agrees with the story of the same event (in which the visitor is called Al Muḩauḩis) in the Arabic Synaxarium. Is this evidence to be rejected? On the contrary, I have shown that the identification of Cyrus as military ruler of Egypt is further confirmed by the seventh-century Syriac document, and I may now add that there is a distinct precedent for the union of the supreme secular and ecclesiastical power in a single person to be found in the sixth century. For Justinian offered the patriarchate of Alexandria coupled with the viceroyalty to Theodosius, if only he would accept the tome of Leo;¹ and, this being so, there is clearly nothing remarkable in the fact that Heraclius united both offices in the person of Cyrus.² Both these statements are made by, or at least occur in, Severus: whose history with its later additions is a compilation the value of which is now admitted by scholars. I spoke somewhat slightly of it, no doubt;³ but I spoke on imperfect acquaintance with the work, which then existed only in MS., but has since been in large part published. Mr. Evetts, who is editing the text with a translation, thus speaks of the work: '*L'Histoire des Patriarches d'Alexandrie est le Liber Pontificalis de l'Église Copte. La première partie est une compilation faite . . . par Sévère, évêque d'El Eshmounein dans la Haute-Égypte, d'après des documents grecs et coptes qu'il a trouvés dans les monastères de son pays et qu'il a traduits*

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, p. 462.

² *Id.*, p. 489.

³ *Arab Conquest*, Pref., p. xiv.

avec l'aide de quelques clercs. . . . Dès le septième siècle et surtout dès l'époque de la conquête arabe, l'histoire des patriarches devient beaucoup plus complète et plus intéressante. *Nous avons ici une série de vraies biographies écrites par des auteurs contemporains.*' With this verdict no one who has carefully studied the work of Severus can fail to agree; but as I have not seen any reasoned discussion of the question, I may venture to give some of the grounds which justify a high estimate of Severus' authority as a historian.¹

From the earliest times the records of the Coptic Church seem to have been written mainly in the form of biographies, and to have been preserved in the library of the well-known monastery of Macarius at Waḍī Naṭrūn. No better place of security could have been found than within the walls of this remote convent fortress in the desert; and here were stored the MSS. on which Severus founded his history. A note dated June 1, A.D. 1081, and added to the text runs as follows²: 'Here ends the sixteenth chapter wherein the history of the fathers is completed as far as Abba Simon, the forty-second patriarch. . . . Hereafter will follow that which we have translated from the documents in the monastery of St. Macarius, viz. the history of the patriarchs from Michael the Last to Sinuthius the First. We

¹ Renaudot in his preface has some remarks on the value of Severus, and gives reasons for not publishing the whole text; but he does not deal with the internal evidence which the text affords for its historic authenticity (*Historia Patriarcharum Alexandrinorum*, Paris, 1713, 4to).

² *Hist. Pat. Alex.* in *Patrol. Orient.*, t. v, fasc. 1, p. 47.

also translated in this monastery the lives of nine other patriarchs in the year 796 of the Martyrs (A.D. 1080). This is written by Apacyrus the deacon and Michael, son of Apater, of Damanhūr, through the grace of God which enabled us to find the histories in the monastery of St. Macarius, with the help of the brother Theodore, the steward, son of Paul, on Sunday the 6th of B'aūnah in the year 797 of the righteous martyrs. We have compared the MSS. one with another and found them corresponding to our copies, and so we assured ourselves of their authenticity.'

This is a record of the careful and conscientious study of original sources, and the same process can be traced nearly four centuries earlier. For we learn from another passage¹ that events up to the time of Chalcedon and Dioscorus (c. A.D. 450) were 'written down in the twelfth part of the histories of the Church'. Next, for the chronicle from Cyril down to Alexander 'we may consult the teacher and scribe George, archdeacon and secretary to the patriarch Simon' (A.D. 689-701), who also wrote his history at the monastery of St. Macarius; and the writer adds, 'Therefore I, the vile sinner, beg you to pray the Lord Christ for me that he may loose the bond of my feeble tongue and open my darkened heart and give me knowledge of words, so that I may be able to show forth what you, my brethren and my father, ask of me, not as a teacher and guide above you but *as a scholar, since I saw that of which I have written with mine own eyes* and its importance imposes an obligation upon me, besides

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, pp. 90-93.

what I heard from friends older than myself such as I could trust and believe.¹ . . . Indeed the Lord Christ knows that *we have added nothing to the facts*, having related what took place down to the death of the blessed father Theodore, patriarch of Alexandria, and the affairs of state in his days to the end of the seventeenth chapter of the history, completed above,' i. e. to A. D. 743. 'Now . . . we will write the eighteenth chapter of the history of the Church,' the historian proceeds, while to an assertion which he makes a few lines lower he adds, 'as we witnessed with our own eyes many times'; and again, 'They set up a king called Kyriakos (in Nubia) who has remained king to the day on which I write this history.'² Here is clear proof of a contemporary writer in the eighth century of our era. The writer was the secretary to Mūsā, bishop of Wasīm, near Gīzah, who constantly writes in the first person—e. g. 'we attended at the palace', 'there was with us Abba Theodore, bishop of Miṣr,' &c.—and he gives textually an extract of the patriarch Michael's memorandum (on the subject of the monastery of Mīnā by Mariūt) which was presented to 'Abd al Malik's secretary.³ On the other hand he defends an omission of certain incidents by saying, 'I have related these matters

¹ This bears a close resemblance to the well-known passage in Thucydides i. 22 τὰ δ' ἔργα τῶν πραχθέντων . . . οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ παρατυχόντος πυνθανόμενος ἠξίωσα γράφειν, οὐδ' ὡς ἐμοὶ ἐδόκει, ἀλλ' οἷς τε αὐτὸς παρήν καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσον δυνατὸν ἀκριβείᾳ περὶ ἐκάστου ἐπέξελλθῶν. It would have been well if Ṭabarī and other Arabic writers had shown the same critical spirit and the same regard for historical accuracy.

² *Hist. Pat.*, p. 143.

³ *Id.*, p. 122.

in the book of his (Michael's) biography apart from this history.'¹ But he again records historical events—the death of Marwān: 'they impaled Marwān head downwards, having taken him prisoner: and we were witnesses of this event.'²

In the seventh century the biographer of John III (A.D. 677–86), in recounting the story of John's last journey to Alexandria says, 'the writer of this history was with him, for he was his spiritual son,' and he gives many graphic details such as a contemporary writer alone could furnish.

Further, many historical allusions which occur in Severus and can be controlled, are obviously correct. Thus in the account of Simon I we read, 'On a Sunday news came to the Amīr that the army of the Romans had risen against the prince Justinian and deposed him, and had appointed Leontius in his stead.'³ Simon's patriarchate is dated A.D. 689–701 or rather 700, and Justinian II was deposed in A.D. 695. Again, 'Meanwhile the Roman monarchy was like a children's game.'⁴ For when the Romans had deposed Justinian their prince, they made Leo (or Leontius) their ruler in his place. But Leo was put to death before he had completed the third year of his reign, and after him reigned Apeimarus (called Tiberius). . . . After him reigned Philippicus. Then after two years Anastasius was made prince of the Romans and is still reigning. [By saying *still* the writer means at the time of composing the history.⁵']

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, p. 114.

² *Id.*, p. 187.

³ *Id.*, p. 35.

⁴ Such as that known as *King of the Castle*.

⁵ *Hist. Pat.*, p. 57. The words in square brackets are a note by

One other instance must suffice. When the tyrant Ḳurrah was governor of Egypt, we are told that he exercised the most violent extortion, seizing and confiscating private property, estates, revenues, and endowments, till the people were reduced to abject poverty, 'and men began to flee from place to place, but no place would harbour them.' For Ḳurrah sent his agent, 'who collected the fugitives from every place, and brought them back, and bound them and punished them.'¹ These events are recorded as happening in the patriarchate of Alexander II (A.D. 705-30). Now this account has been absolutely confirmed by the recently discovered Aphrodito papyri, where precisely the same story of the fugitives may be gathered from the Greek documents, which are dated A.D. 708-10.² This coincidence of the two versions is exceedingly strong evidence for the historical accuracy of the *History of the Patriarchs*.

It is no doubt difficult at times to distinguish the real author of any particular story in this work, for the reason that the biographies and other documents embodied in the history were written by several hands during the life or just after the death of the successive patriarchs; and the *ego* of the writer is constantly changing. Thus the compiler who says, at the end of the life of Michael I, 'he the translator or editor of the original Greek or Coptic record. Mr. Evetts ascribes the note to Mauhüb.

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, p. 64.

² See two articles by Mr. H. I. Bell, (1) *The Aphrodito Papyri* in *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, vol. xxviii, p. 98 (1908), and (2) *Translations of the Greek Aphrodito Papyri in the British Museum* in *Der Islam*, Bd. ii, Heft 2/3, p. 270 (Strassburg, 1911).

remained on the evangelical throne, according to the statement which we found in the library of the monastery of St. Macarius, twenty-three years and a half' ¹(to A. D. 768), cannot be the same as the writer who speaks of Anastasius as Roman emperor still reigning, though he is doubtless the author of the comment on the word *still*. But the fact that the various MSS. found in the library were copied *verbatim et litteratim*, and that they go back to the earliest times and are contemporary for the most part with the events recorded, gives a very high value to the work. Of course, miraculous and fabulous elements as well as mistakes are found, just as they are found in all the Arab historians; but there would be little early history of any sort left, if every record tainted with legendary matter or error were rejected. And on the whole I say without fear that the general credibility of the patriarchal chronicles on matters of history is established beyond question.

This has been a rather long digression; but it was necessary to rebut Dr. Lane-Poole's assertion impugning Severus' authority. He makes a great point of the apparent admission by Severus that he did not know Greek or Coptic. This confession of ignorance is certainly made by the writer of the third preface to the history; but there is strong evidence that Severus' name was attached by the error of a copyist to that preface, which Severus cannot have written.² There proves therefore on examination to

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, p. 215.

² The share of Severus in the editorship of these histories is difficult to determine. If the third preface were written by him, it

be little or no warrant for the belief that Severus was ignorant of Greek and Coptic, and every warrant for the belief that his history was a careful compilation founded upon authentic documents. It is accordingly wrong to discredit his evidence; indeed, I am not aware of a single Arab historian whose work can be shown to be based in the same way upon a continuous series of written records, and records, for the most part, of contemporary writers. The Arab historians recount a great many traditions of early times, but they very seldom cite or even mention original documents.¹ In other words, Coptic history is based on a much more scientific and solid foundation of MS. authority.

These considerations justify such an estimate of the historical value of Severus' work, that its evidence on the question of Al Muḩauḩis' identity cannot be

would mean that his collection went down to his own times, i. e. at least to A. D. 977, and that it included some biographies, composed by himself, of patriarchs his contemporaries. But the author or compiler of the ten biographies from Michael III (A. D. 881) to Sinuthius II (died A. D. 1047) was Michael, bishop of Tinnis; and in these Severus had no hand. It seems probable, according to the best opinion, that Severus' own work was the collection and compilation of the lives of the first forty-two patriarchs from St. Mark to Simon I, and that this is the work referred to as the *Book of Biographies* in the list of Severus' works given in the Life of Philotheus (A. D. 981-1005); and also the work which about a hundred years later was discovered at the monastery of the Lady at Nahyā by Mauhūb, as he relates in his preface to the twenty-sixth chapter of the *History of the Patriarchs*, a chapter not yet published (Paris MS. 302, p. 135).

¹ Of course, it is common enough for one Arab writer to quote another, e. g. Maḩrīzī cites Ibn 'Abd al ḩakam and others. But Ibn 'Abd al ḩakam does not enlighten us with regard to his original MS. sources.

lightly set aside. Let us see then what Severus says—or rather the biographer of the patriarch Benjamin.

‘Heraclius appointed Cyrus, governor of Egypt, to be both patriarch and governor together.’ When Cyrus came to Alexandria Benjamin was warned and fled to a desert monastery in Upper Egypt, where he remained in hiding for ten years, and ‘these were the years’, he says, ‘during which Heraclius and Al Muḩauḩis reigned over Egypt.’ He again speaks of Al Muḩauḩis as having driven him away, and speaks of Cyrus as ‘the misbelieving governor of Alexandria, who was both governor and patriarch under the Romans’.¹ This language establishes the identity of Cyrus and Al Muḩauḩis very clearly, and, as I have shown,² it completely agrees with the language of the Arabic Synaxarium³ —‘Al Muḩauḩis was head of the faith of Chalcedon, and had been made governor and patriarch over Egypt’,—and with the Ethiopic Synaxarium, ‘Al Muḩauḩis, i. e. the governor and archbishop of the city of Alexandria and all the land of Egypt.’¹ I have also shown the exact correspondence of the language with that of the contemporary Bodleian MS., which makes the Muḩauḩis hold the two offices of archbishop (or patriarch) and controller of finance in Egypt; and I have shown how a nearly contem-

¹ *Hist. Pat.*, pp. 490, 491, 495.

² *Arab Conquest*, p. 521.

³ The fact that the story of Benjamin at ḩalamūn and the visit of Al Muḩauḩis is confirmed by the contemporary Bodleian MS., is good evidence for the authority of the Synaxarium on this question.

porary Syriac MS., the *Chronicon Anonymum*, makes the patriarch of Alexandria responsible for the military defences of Egypt against the Arabs; while on the other hand the Arab historian Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam describes the viceroy of Heraclius in Egypt as possessing full military power and as controller of finance, and calls him Al Muḵauḵis.

The Greek historians also use language tending to the same conclusion. Nicephorus¹ says that Heraclius sent Marianus to Alexandria to act in concert with Cyrus, the patriarch of Alexandria, and to settle together some arrangement with regard to the Arabs; and again he speaks of Cyrus as bishop of Alexandria.²

Theophanes is more explicit. He says, 'on the death of George (melkite or Chalcedonian patriarch) Cyrus was sent as bishop to Alexandria,'³ and speaking of the Arabs he says: 'They invaded Egypt. Now Cyrus was charged before the emperor with having made over the gold of Egypt to the Arabs, and the emperor sent an angry message for his recall.'⁴

The facts to which these Greek writers testify are as follows. Both agree that Cyrus was patriarch of

¹ Nicephorus Constantinopolitanus, *De Rebus post Mauricium gestis, Corp. Script. Hist. Byzant.*, p. 28 παραγγείλας ὡς ἀνακοινοῦσθαι Κύρω τῷ Ἀλεξανδρείας ἱεράρχῃ καὶ ὡς ἂν κοινῇ βουλευσούντο τὰ πρὸς τοὺς Σαρακηνοὺς διάδουντο.

² Id. ib., p. 30.

³ See *Corp. Script. Hist. Byzant.*, *Theophanes*, t. i, p. 507.

⁴ Id. ib., p. 518 Στρατεύουσι κατ' Αἰγύπτου. κατηγορεῖτο δὲ ὁ Κύρος ἐπὶ τοῦ βασιλέως ὡς τὸ χρυσίον τῆς Αἰγύπτου τοῖς Σαρακηνοῖς δούς. καὶ ἀποστείλας μετ' ὀργῆς τοῦτον μετεπέμψατο.

Alexandria. Nicephorus also represents Marianus,¹ the military commander, as sent by Heraclius under orders to act with Cyrus in reference to the Arabs—a statement which implies that Cyrus had secular as well as ecclesiastical authority in Egypt; while Theophanes asserts that Cyrus, having undertaken to pay tribute to the Arabs, was angrily recalled by Heraclius. This again implies that Cyrus was armed with secular power as Heraclius' viceroy, and the allusion is clearly to the treaty of Miṣr made by Cyrus and its angry repudiation by the emperor.²

¹ The names Marinus and Marianus are both given in Theophanes, but to separate persons; and I cannot help wondering whether these names lie concealed under the Arabic Abū Maryam and Abū Maryām. Marianus also is found in the biography of Benjamin in Severus. It is of course true that these Graeco-Roman names are given to generals and not to bishops, as in Ṭabarī's story; but the confusion is quite possible. The name Aretianus is also found, and some confusion with Aretion certainly exists here; while Arrianus seems to be another variant.

² Caetani (pp. 244–5) has a long note criticizing what he calls my reconstruction of the conquest in connexion with this incident. He is persuaded that the Copts, literally so called as distinct from the Romans, entered into the treaty of Miṣr—a view which I have endeavoured to refute above—and he remarks: 'Non è logico che i Copti, nel fare un trattato con gli Arabi, si riserbassero di sentire il parere ed avere l'approvazione di Eraclio. È chiaro che Eraclio l'avrebbe respinto. Nel testo di Ibn 'Abd al Ḥakam si parla d'un solo trattato e non di due. Ciro al principio dell'assedio di Babilonia era forse in Alessandria, e le fonti bizantine ignorano questo trattato respinto da Eraclio e la deposizione di Ciro per effetto di esso.' Apart from the fallacious assumption that the Copts, as such, were in a position to make any treaty, it seems a sufficient answer to say that the learned Italian writer must have forgotten Theophanes. For the rest, I cannot agree that the recall of Cyrus was caused by his general mismanagement of the war, or by a sudden outburst of wrath on Heraclius' part, or that his

But how closely this evidence of the Greek historians tallies with that of the Arab writers in all but this one point—that the Arabs use the term *Al Muḩauḩis* where the Greeks write *Cyrus*! For the Arab writers agree generally that the treaty with 'Amr was made by Al Muḩauḩis, that it had to be submitted by him for approval to Heraclius, and that Heraclius repudiated it with anger; and though they do not mention the recall of Al Muḩauḩis, the recall of Cyrus is confirmed by the contemporary writer John of Nikiou.

It remains briefly to notice the testimony of two Christian Arabic historians—Abū Ṣāliḩ, and Sa'īd ibn al Bāṭriḩ or Eutychius. Abū Ṣāliḩ, while agreeing that Al Muḩauḩis was made governor of Egypt by Heraclius,¹ also says that the ten years of banishment suffered by the patriarch Benjamin were the ten years during which Al Muḩauḩis was ruling in Egypt.² I do not blink the fact that Abū Ṣāliḩ makes the Muḩauḩis bear the name of George, son of Mīnā,³ and that other writers give

mission to Egypt after Heraclius' death proves that he was not regarded as a traitor. It merely proves that the surrender advocated by Cyrus was no longer thought impossible. One more point. Yāḩūt expressly says that though the Muḩauḩis generally resided at Alexandria, yet that he was at Babylon at the time of the siege, as Caetani (p. 254) records: how then can Caetani justify the assertion that he was *perhaps* at Alexandria?

¹ Caetani, p. 81.

² *Id.*, p. 230.

³ I have not much to alter in the views expressed by me in the *Arab Conquest* (pp. 522-3), though I doubt now whether Al 'Arāj (which means 'the cripple') was suggested in any way by Jurīj or Juraij. It looks more like a nickname to which we have no further clue; while Juraij doubtless, as Caetani remarks, corresponds to Gregory rather than to George. In that case it = ḩarḩar. Caetani,

other names; but it is sufficient to say that no name whatever is attached to the title in any early authority, and that a name first occurring five or six centuries after the death of Al Muḳauḳis cannot stand for a moment against the cumulative force of the arguments identifying Al Muḳauḳis with Cyrus. Abū Şāliḥ the Armenian then agrees with the Coptic and Greek and with the Egyptian historians as to the office which Al Muḳauḳis held, and he agrees with Severus that Al Muḳauḳis was the Chalcedonian persecutor of the Copts who drove Benjamin into exile.

Eutychius (A.D. 876–939) wrote about three centuries before Abū Şāliḥ, and it must be remembered that he was not merely a Chalcedonian himself, but actually melkite patriarch in Egypt. He says, 'After the flight of George, Cyrus became patriarch of Alexandria. He was a Maronite, of the same creed as Heraclius';¹ but in another place² he says:

و كان العامل على الخراج بمصر المقوقس من قبل
هركل الملك

The controller of the revenue in Egypt on behalf of the emperor Heraclius was Al Muḳauḳis, 'who was', he adds, 'a Jacobite (or Copt) hating the Romans, but not daring to betray his Jacobite opinions, lest he should be put to death by the Romans'!

Of course Eutychius as melkite patriarch was anxious to remove from the memory of Cyrus the

p. 91: cf. also his note on p. 94 with reference to my explanation of the term Ḳarḳar.

¹ *Eutychii Annales*, ed. Pococke, t. ii, p. 267 (Oxon., 1654, 4to).

² *Id. ib.*, p. 302.

odium of the surrender of Egypt to the Arabs; but he is driven to strange shifts. Thus having declared that Cyrus came as patriarch on Heraclius' appointment to Alexandria, he avers on the same page that there was no melkite patriarch of Alexandria for ninety-seven years after the flight of George—a very daring perversion of history. Apparently, therefore, Eutychius at once refuses to recognize Cyrus as melkite patriarch and at the same time charges Al Muḩauḩis with being a Copt at heart. The very charge is an admission that Al Muḩauḩis was professedly a melkite: and though Eutychius does not say that Cyrus and Al Muḩauḩis were one, this coincidence is very significant; while his further statement that Al Muḩauḩis was made controller of the revenue by Heraclius brings him into line with Ibn 'Abd al ḩakam and with the Bodleian Coptic MS. Like the Arab writers too Eutychius represents Al Muḩauḩis as present in the fortress of Babylon at the siege, as retiring to Rauḩah, as negotiating with 'Amr, and as concluding peace by the Treaty of Miṣr. But I attribute Eutychius' failure to identify Cyrus with Al Muḩauḩis in terms rather to ignorance than to disingenuousness—an ignorance which leads him to speak of Al Muḩauḩis as alive at the time of Manuel's rebellion.¹

¹ Ibn 'Abd al ḩakam has been quoted as supporting this statement; but the fact is that there was no one alive at the date of Manuel's rebellion (A. D. 645) to whom the name could apply, and Arab writers persistently confuse the peaceful surrender of Alexandria by the Muḩauḩis with its subsequent recapture from the rebel Manuel.

I have now shown what an extraordinary concurrence and convergence of evidence there is from original and sometimes contemporary documents—Greek, Coptic, Syriac, and Arabic—establishing the identity of Al Muḳauḳis with Cyrus, Patriarch of Alexandria, Controller of the Revenues, and Governor-General of Egypt at the time of the conquest. It is no answer to say that the title Al Muḳauḳis is sometimes given by Arab historians to this or that person who cannot have been Cyrus. I admit the fact, but totally deny the conclusion that, because the term is misapplied in particular cases and bestowed on different persons, therefore it does not properly belong to any single person. That seems to be Caetani's argument.¹ But the truth rather is that while the Arab historians for the most part wrote with only a vague notion of the Muḳauḳis as

¹ p. 342. 'Nella narrazione della resa di Babilonia presso le fonti Arabi noi crediamo perciò possibile che sotto il nome di Al Muḳawqis siano da intendersi due persone distinte e diverse, le quali nullo hanno che fare con Ciro ossia il comandante militare greco che consegnò la rocca di Babilonia, e un qualche vescovo copto che ottenne un accordo provvisorio per la protezione delli Copti sino alla fine della campagna contro i Greci. Siccome Ciro infine riappare sicuramente nei cronisti musulmani come Al Muḳawqis alla resa di Alessandria, è evidente che sotto un solo nome si ascondono per lo meno tre persone distinte.' Again on pp. 244-5 he speaks of my 'erroneous theory that Al Muḳauḳis is always Cyrus'. That of course is an unfair presentment of the case. I admit fully that actions and situations are ascribed by Arab historians to an Al Muḳauḳis who cannot always be Cyrus; but their erroneous application of the name does not render my theory erroneous. But I hope it is not presumptuous to say, in differing from Caetani, that I have the profoundest respect and admiration for his monumental *Annali dell' Islam* and the amazing amount of scholarly labour and research which it contains.

governor of Egypt, they not unnaturally represent him at times as concerned in actions or incidents in which he had no direct part or presence. They were undeniably bewildered on the subject of his name and personality, and thus make mistakes about it. But the problem remains amid their discrepancies to discover the true personality—to identify the real Muḳauḳis. No Arab writer has said or could say that there were three different persons all rightly bearing that title: nor is it logical to argue that the existence of discrepancies renders the riddle of the title insoluble. It is the business of historical criticism to sift discrepancies and to get at the underlying truth. And I venture to think that an impartial survey of the evidence establishes beyond question the conclusion that Al Muḳauḳis must be identified with Cyrus and with no one else.



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